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ORIGINAL STORIES OF THE HEROISM, SUFFERING AND ADVENTURES OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND SAILORS.

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TONY TIBBITS;

THE UNION DRUMMER BOY.

By MAJOR WALTER WILMOT.

The Boy, Drum and all, were jerked upward, and placed beside the driver.

TONY TIBBITS;

THE UNION DRUMMER BOY.

A Tale of Gettysburg and the Twelfth Army Corps.

By MAJOR WALTER WILMOT.

Author of "Dashing Delany;" "Captain Jack, the Hero of Palo Alto;" "The Fighting Brigade;" "On the Ocean Deep," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

THE WAR CORRESPONDENT AND HIS PRISONER.

It was the night after the first day's fight at Gettysburg. General Hancock had already joined the troops on Cemetery Hill, having been sent by General Meade, on learning the death of Reynolds, to assume the command of the field till he himself could reach the front.

In conjunction with General Howard, General Hancock had immediately proceeded to post troops and repel an attack on the right flank. The attack, however, had been but feebly made, and so was promptly repulsed.

At nightfall the little army on the hill that had so gallantly sustained itself through the toil and peril of the day was cheered by the arrival of General Slocum, with the Twelfth Corps, and General Sickles, with a part of the Third.

With Slocum there had come a young man of good build, a resolute look, and, withal, a military air. He was mounted upon a magnificent horse, wore heavy riding boots, a military cloak and slouch hat; and yet this belligerant-looking young man was not, in a strict military sense, connected with the army.

Who and what he was we shall soon discover.

In a marvelously short time he had possessed himself of the situation—knew all that had transpired from early dawn when Reynolds pushed forward to Gettysburg, and found Buford with his cavalry engaging the enemy, till dewy eve, when the attack on the right flank had been repulsed.

Having learned all it was possible to find out, he once more mounted his horse and galloped away into the darkness, muttering to himself as he sped over the ground:

"Now how to get the news to New York before any of the other fellows, that's the question. Wires cut for miles in every direction, so they say, and of course it's true—leave Stuart and his cavalry alone for that. All the instruments destroyed too. Hum! that's worse; might manage somehow about the wires, but, deuce take it! I can't make a new instrument nor procure one either at a moment's notice. But pshaw! some operator has had sense and wit enough to conceal his instrument, and if there's one to be found within a radius of twenty miles, I'll have it. Halloo! what's that place ahead? I'm sure I see a light."

"Yes, a farm house. Hope the rebs ain't in possession there; but of course they're not; this side at least is held by the blue coats. I must stop and see what I can find out. I may have struck the very spot I'm in search of."

The gate had been torn from its hinges, so without dismounting he rode into the front yard, and having reached the door, gave a sounding knock with the handle of his heavy riding whip.

The alarm seemed to cause a general disturbance within, for he could hear the sound of hurrying footsteps and excited voices; but after another and more impatient knock, a white-robed form appeared at the window just over his head.

It was a woman's form, and a woman's voice that demanded, in a somewhat excited and querrulous tone, what in the world he wanted *now?*

"My dear madam," answered the horseman, in a polite and persuasive tone, "pardon my unseasonable visit, I beg; but the fact is, I am most anxious to procure a guide to the nearest town or railway station that the rebels have not visited, and where there's likely to be a telegraph office."

"There ain't no sich town in these parts, stranger—they've been everywhere."

"You're sure?"

"Sartin sure."

"Well, then, I must have a guide to put me in the way of finding a town or station *not* in these parts, if they've been everywhere about here."

"There ain't nobody in this 'ere house to show you the way, mister," Then looking back into the room: "What? what d'ye say?"

A man's voice murmured a question, which, once more looking out, she repeated:

"I say, mister, who be you, any way?"

"I'm connected with the press, and *must get* a dispatch through to New York to night—do you understand?"

"The press! What kind of a press is it now?"

"The newspaper press, madam, the newspaper press."

"Oh!" and again she turned back, and there was a scarcely audible murmur, to which she answered, "Hey?" and then, on its being repeated, called out to the stranger:

"I say, you ain't no rebel, be you?"

"No—no, of course not, I tell you I'm a newspaper correspondent, and connected with the army of the Potomac."

"Will you pay for a guide?"

"Yes, yes, let me in, and we can easily settle that business."

"Better let him in, Nancy," now interrupted the unseen man, in quite a distinct tone of voice; "reckon he's all right any way," and so a minute or two later, the door was opened, and the war correspondent sprang from his horse and hurried into the house.

Behind the woman who had opened the door stood a great burly man, in his shirt sleeves, who at once hinted to the correspondent that, for good pay, he was ready to put him

bearded old soldier suddenly thrust a drum into his hands, with the hurried words:

"Here, bub, this is more in your line than mine, just give it particular fits, its bettr music to the boys' ears than dying greans; and I say, don't stand there as if you were a-going to take root, but just drive on for the other side of the hill. By Jove! I'd take you for a raw recruit if your uniform didn't tell a better tale."

Tony, from very fear began beating the drum with might and main, and if he didn't succeed in getting much music out of it, he made noise enough, and that seemed to be the most essential point just then.

At the same time he hurried forward, as he had been ordered to do, and for a while kept pretty well up with the men with whom he had passed a portion of the night, and some of whose faces he recognized.

But soon he became confused by all that was passing around him, the heavy tramp of armed men, the neigh of the war horse, the harsh rattle of the wheels of artillery hurrying to their stations, the voice of the bugle, the roll of the drum, and all the indescribable tumult of preparaiion.

From the point where he now found himself, he saw the various corps of the army as they arrived and were moved to their positions on Cemetery Hill and the ridge that extended southeast and southwest; and as if by magic, he saw batteries planted and breastworks thrown up.

Faster and faster the troops assembled, and by seven o'clock the second and fifth corps with the rest of the third had reached the ground, and now the skirmishing began, but as yet no severe conflict took place.

Tony continued to gaze upon all that was passing around him as if fascinated, and presently forgot even to beat his drum.

"Out o'ther way there, bub!" and a span of spirited horses, attached to a caisson swept madly by.

But when the team was gone, Tony was no longer standing where it had found him—a hand had reached down from the wagon, and the next instant the boy, drum and all, were jerked upward, and placed beside the driver.

Tony regarded the powerful man with a look of astonishment.

"There's no use in gettin' killed when you won't be even so much as thanked for it," said the driver, "time enough for that when you can't help yourself."

"What, was I likely to get killed where I was standing?" asked Tony.

"Well, I reckon," was the reply, then regarding the boy curiously; "What regiment and corps do you belong to?"

"What did you say, sir?"

"I asked what was your command?"

"I—I don't know," stammered poor Tony.

"Well, here's a pretty go," muttered the driver, as he brought his horses to a stand, "a bright looking boy enough, and yet don't know his own regiment. Jump down, bub."

Tony quickly descended to the ground.

The driver's attention was now directed another way—an officer was ordering him to move the caisson further to the right, thus the boy was left once more to himself—alone in a great crowd, bent on death and destruction.

Strange to say, not a thought of getting away from that pandemonium of a place, even entered his head. In a passive sort of sense he began to consider himself as belonging there—as a part of the tremendous panorama that was continually unfolding itself before the eye.

The great body of the rebels were posted on the opposite ridge, north of the town, distant from a mile to a mile and a half, and overlopping the Federal army on each wing.

The roads on which the enemy would desire to march across the valley were commanded by Meade's guns; and hence General Lee must fight with the hills against him. There was no conceivable approach that could not be raked and crossed by the fire of the Federal cannon.

The reserve, artillery, and all the essentials to insure victory were in position, and at the right time.

The immense cavalry force, too, for once, at least, was present, covering both flanks of the army, and ready for constantly harassing the enemy.

The latter, we may here say, was a new and encouraging circumstance which gave confidence to the men, while it afforded security to the teams.

The southern ends of the two diverging ridges or lines of hills on which the Federal army was drawn up terminated, each, in a steep, sugar-loaf peak, which thoroughly protected the flanks. To attempt to march along the sides of these ridges and around these terminal peaks, would have exposed the rebels to the danger of weakening their front so greatly, as to make it easy for General Meade to cut off the flanking force. Hence, a battle being determined on, there was no alternative but to attack the Federal position directly in front.

For once, then, in the history of the Army of the Potomac, the enemy in accepting the gnage of combat was compelled to fight at a disadvantage.

Tony could neither see nor understand all this, but he did see, and he could interpret the exultant looks which animated the countenances of all about him. And a thrill of excitement agitated his own breast, and he longed to take some other part in the great drama about to open, than that of a mere spectator.

CHAPTER IV.

TONY BECOMES A SOLDIER ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.

Skirmishing continued, and now and then the roar of a great gun broke on the air; but the real conflict seemed as far off as ever.

Regiment after regiment was still pressing foward around the hill, in a ceaseless stream, and all at once Tony was caught up by the hurrying mass and carried onward with it toward a park of artillery, which crowned a neighboring eminence.

Suddenly, he heard a hail, the next instant he was jerked to one side, and on turning round, saw the gray-bearded, kindly face of the old soldier who had given him the drum a little while before, looking down upon him.

"So, my lad, here you are, eh? Didn't know what had become of you. Lost your command in the excitement this morning, I fancy."

"Hain't got any command to lose," said Tony desperately, "and that's just what I wish I had."

"What's that he says?" asked a good natured, pleasant looking Irishman, coming toward them, "hain't got any command? Shure, thin, has your whole regiment been wiped out entirely?"

"I never had any regiment," said Tony.

"Never had a regiment! Phat did ye have thin?—a battalion, a company, or phat?"

"I didn't have any thing at all."

"The deuce ye didn't! then what are ye doin' in thim regimentals?"

"Them what?"

"Regimentals—uniform—clothes."

"Oh, the man who sent me here had me put them on. Some fellows who called themselves soldiers forced their way into our house last night after I had gone to bed, and along with a great many other things, carried off all my clothing, so, when this man wanted to send me with a letter to the general, he told me to put on these."

"And to whom did these belong to, my boy?" asked the old soldier thoughtfully. This may prove to be a serious matter for you, or for somebody."

"Oh, divil a serious matter at all will it be for ye, me boy," exclaimed Tim, quickly; "we'll see to all that; but who did they belong to, jist ther same?"

"A wounded drummer boy who was brought to our house early in the evening."

"This case ought to be reported to the officers at once," said the old soldier.

"To the deuce wid the officers! Corporal Snowden, shure, 'tis yerself that knows they've got something of more importance than this b'y to think av jist now."

"You're right there, Tim, so they

have. Still, we ought not to lose sight of the lad."

"Av course not. We'll keep him wid our company. Shure, 'tis an iligant soldier I'll make av him, if he's only put in me charge."

"Yes," said the corporal, "we'll keep him with us; come on, boy," and as they hurried him along: "By-the-way, what's your name?"

"Touy."

"Tony what?"

"Tibbits, sir, Tony Tibbits."

"Tony Tibbits!" exclaimed the Irishman; "shure, thin, it's an iligant name, almost as foine as me own, and that's Tim Cooney, all the worruld over."

"And if the world don't know it, it won't be your fault, Tim," laughed the corporal.

"Yer niver said a thruer word in your loife, corporal."

By this time the trio had reached a somewhat secluded nook on the hillside, where a portion of a regiment had installed itself, and seemed, in a desultory sort of way, to be preparing breakfast.

"How are you, corporal—halloo, Tim, me boy!" called out at least a dozen voices, and then some one asked:

"Where did you pick up the kid?"

"Is that yerself, Billy Duffy?" said Tim; "thin jist luk at him an' tell me is he an old soldier or not?"

"He's a plaguey young soldier, I should say," laughed Sergeant Small, who just then was preparing to swallow a cup of hot coffee.

"Av course he's young," assented Tim, but that ain't phat I mean at all, for, d'ye see, Peter Small, he may be a young b'y and yet an old soldier. Phat de ye say, Billy Duffy?"

"He looks as though he'd seen service," said Billy, with a wise nod of the head.

"An' you, Stephen Hughes?"

"He's got the right color on him," answered Stephen, critically.

"I'd like to see how he handles the drumsticks before I give an opinion," said Phil McGiveney, "I've a boy of me own about his age, and if he can't knock Hail Columbia and Yankee Doodle out of a drum in less time and in better style than any other drummer in the army, why, I wouldn't say so, that's all."

"Yes, yes," cried Tommy Glynn, and at least half a dozen others, "let's see how he can handle the sticks. Come, bub, just hammer away for us a little."

"Give the sheepskin fits, me boy," said Jimmy Keenan, with an encouraging nod and a wink.

"I can pound hard enough, if that's all you want," said Tony, grasping the two sticks; "but as for making any music, I can't do it. I never had a drum or a pair of drumsticks in my hands before to-day in all my life."

"What's that he says?" demanded Joe O'Brien; "never had hold of a drum before? Then what in the world is he doing round here in that uniform, I'd like to know."

"Yes," said Sergeant Small, turning to Snowden, "where did you pick up the lad, corporal? Let's know all about it."

"Listen to me, sergeant, darlint," exclaimed Tim Cooney, as he eagerly pressed his way forward; "it's well acquainted I am wid the lad, and I can tell ye his story as aisy as ther praste can say mass. Hear me now."

"Hold up a moment, will you, Tim? The only trouble with you is that you ain't a priest yourself; you were surely cut out for one."

"It's right ye are, sergeant. Shure I have an iligant gift av the gab, an' would have made a foine praste intirely; but, murther, phat would Mrs. Cooney and the gorsoons have done thin, I dunno?"

"That's more than I can tell you. But come, let's hear what the corporal has to say."

In a few words Corporal Snowden told all he knew about Tony and satisfactorily accounted for the manner in which he had come into possession of the drum. Then, without invitation, Tim told a beautiful romance about the young adventurer, and wound up by proposing that the company should formally adopt him, and that he should at once be installed as their drummer.

"The very thing!" exclaimed Steve Hughes, "for you know that our drummer is in the hospital, and is to receive his discharge for disability, if he hasn't got it already."

"True enough," said Sergeant Small; "but then, as I understand it, the boy don't know any more about drumming than a mule about sacred music."

"That don't make any difference," said Phil McGiveney, quickly; "he shall know all about it in less than a week; I'll teach him myself."

"What, you, Phil?"

"Of course; didn't I make a musician of my own boy, and can't I do as well by another?"

"That settles it," cried Duffy; "run the kid over to Professor McGiveney at once."

"What's all this talk about?" asked a fine looking officer, of some twenty-six or seven years, as he now approached the group.

Sergeant Small started to his feet, and with a military salute entered into an explanation.

"Hum," said Captain Ellsworth, when he had finished. "I've heard something about this boy before, I fancy." Then turning to Tony: "Did you enter our lines in the night with a note for the general?"

"Yes, sir. was the prompt reply.

"Who sent you?" asked the Captain.

"A man who came to our house on horseback, sir."

"Where is your house?"

"Down the creek apiece—Farmer Gripper's place, sir."

"What kind of a looking man was it?"

Tony, to the best of his ability, described the correspondent.

"Ah! I think I know who he means," exclaimed Corporal Snowpen, suddenly.

"Well?" said the Captain.

"I'm pretty sure it was Byington of the New York Tribune. I saw him start out in the early part of the night and he took that direction."

"You must be right," said the Captain musingly, "he probably wanted help to repair the telegraph wires, and so sent to the general for it."

"But about the boy, Captain darlint," put in Tim, with the greatest assurance in the world, "Shure we may kape him?"

"I don't know about that," answered the Captain, slowly. "If I understand the matter rightly, he's legally bound to this farmer until he's twenty-one, and the master or guardian could come and demand him of us at any time."

"No fear of his coming for the next two or three days, at least," said Tim, "an' after that he might have a hard job huntin' us up, I'm thinkin'."

"And I fancy," said Corporal Snowden, "that Uncle Sam needs his services quite as much as this hard fisted farmer, and for that matter, is quite as much entitled to them."

"There's much truth in that, Corporal," rejoined the captain, approvingly, then turning to Tony:

"How is it, my boy, had you rather go back to the farm, or stay with us?"

"Stay with you a hundred times over," was the earnest reply.

"Think seriously, my boy, a soldier's life is full of hardships and dangers, then—"

"It's a glorious life, sir," interrupted Tony eagerly, "and I should be fighting for my country."

"Well said," murmured Corporal Snowden, with an approving nod.

"But listen," urged the Captain, "even now you can hear the sounds that herald death to some one; and look around you, at this very moment, on every hand, you see thousands hurrying to their fate."

"No matter," said Tony firmly, "it may as well be me as they. If I die, I shall die in a good cause; if I live, I shall be proud of the choice I make this day."

"Enough, you shall be one of us, and if Farmer Gripper institutes a search for you, I fancy, from what I know of these brave boys, that it will be no easy task to find you."

"Arrah! jist let him come," said Tim, "Sure, its a foine scare we'll give him."

"By Jove! I hope he will," chuckled Duffy, rubbing his hands together.

"Then that's settled," said the captain, and I leave the young re-

cruit for you to look after, boys. See that he doesn't suffer in your hands."

"All right, captain," and as Randal Ellsworth turned away, Sergeant Small called out,

"Tony, my boy, I'll bet a Scotch shilling—and that's a big one—that you haven't had bite nor sup since you woke this morning."

"You're right, sir," answered Tony, casting a wistful glance at some hard-tack and a few other soldiers' delicacies which were scattered around.

"Come and sit down beside me then and help yourself, lad."

Tony obeyed with alacrity, and for the next few minutes was too busy to answer half the questions that were rained upon him by the boys.

CHAPTER V.

DESPERATE FIGHTING—TIM COONEY PREDICTS GREAT THINGS FOR TONY.

HOUR after hour passed, and still Tony and his new friends remained out of harm's way in the sheltering nook.

The inaction of the rebel army seemed providential. Had the contest been renewed in earnest at daylight, with the first and eleventh corps exhausted by the battle and the subsequent retreat, the third and twelfth weary from their forced march, and the second, fifth and sixth not yet arrived, nothing but a miracle could have saved the army from destruction.

Instead of this, as we have seen, the day dawned, the sun rose, the cool hours of morning passed, and the forenoon wore away, with no serious aggressive movement on the part of the enemy. Thus, time was given for the absent half of the Union army to arrive and take their place in the lines, while the rest of the troops enjoyed a much needed half day's rest.

It was not until two o'clock in the afternoon that Sedgwick arrived with the sixth corps. He had marched thirty-two miles since nine o'clock in the morning of the day before.

It was only on his arrival that the Federal army attained anything like an equality of numbers with that of the rebels pitted against it.

At length, between three and four o'clock in the afternoon, the work of death began. The Federal batteries in front of the rebel line of fire replied vigorously; and for two hours the roar and thunder, and flame, and smoke of artillery so completely filled the heavens that all else seemed forgotten.

At length through the woods on the left black masses were seen moving—larger, more frequent, and nearer!

Skirmishing in that part of the field became sharper.

General Sickles moved forward to develop the enemy s intentions and to gain a commanding position from which to repel the rebel attack. Bigelow's Massachusett's battery accompanied him.

General Sickles' position was unfortunately too far from the main line to be promptly or immediately supported by the second or Fifth corps.

General Meade saw this and sought Sickles at once, and discussed with him the propriety of falling back to the line of his supports; but the enemy had perceived his exposed position, and were rushing forward to the attack in heavy force, about twenty-six thousand men being thrown at once upon this single corps.

Very early in the engagement General Sickles was severely wounded, and Major General Birney took command of the corps, and retained it, though himself wounded soon after.

After a brave and determined resistance, the corps was forced back; and the enemy, flushed with success, pressed forward with all their might for the high ground between Round Top and Little Round Top. If they could reach and hold this they would be able to command the Federal position on Cemetery Hill.

The struggle was fierce and desperate, and, for nearly four hours, victory seemed poised in the balance.

Bigelow's battery, which had not previously been under fire, occupied an exposed position, and the rebels seemed determined to take it. Major McGilvray, who commanded the artillery on the left, ordered Captain Bigelow to hold his position till he could get up two batteries on the ridge, and to give the rebels grave and canister.

Captain Bigelow obeyed, and as the rebels came up to the very muzzles of his cannon to capture them, he blew them to pieces, and filled the air with the scattered fragments of their bodies.

Still they rushed on with demoniac yells, climbing upon the limbers, and shooting the horses, but Bigelow held on, though nearly all his horses were killed, five of his sergeants dead, and three of his cannoners and twenty-two of his men wounded, and himself shot through the side, till the booming of the guns from the ridge told that McGilvray had planted his batteries. He then brought off five of his limbers and two of his guns, dragging them in part by hand.

The rebels rushed forward, seized the four pieces with loud shouts, and came on for new triumphs, but McGilvray's batteries drove them back with terrible slaughter, and a fresh division coming up to reinforce the third corps, charged upon the rebels and recaptured the guns.

It was at this moment that Larry O'Brien and Jim Pender, both of Captain Ellsworth's company, rushed in among their comrades, and with one breath exclaimed:

"O," boys, the most elegant piece of fighting you ever saw in your lives. Sickles' corps is in for it hot and heavy, and they want help the worst way. I wish the colonel would let us take a hand."

"Arrah, now, Sergeant darlint," cried Tim Cooney, "just spake to the captain, af he axes it as a favor, shure, the colonel won't refuse."

"I'll do it," said Sergeant Small, "but I fear its of no use. It's irregular, you see."

At that moment the captain and several other officers approached.

The Sergeant at once made known the wishes of his comrades.

Captain Ellsworth shook his head.

"No use," he said, "the regiment will have enough to do by-and-by, I'm thinking; still, if you wish it, I'll speak to the colonel."

"Then spake at onct, captain, darlint," said Tim, "for see, sure, he's comin' now."

As the colonel came up, the captain referred to him the singular request of his men.

"No use," exclaimed the colonel, promptly; "'twouldn't do at all—can't think of it for a moment. Meade will see that Sickles' corps don't suffer."

"Arrah now, colonel," began Tim, in a wheedling voice.

"Well, I don't know," continued the colonel, with a grim smile; "if you're all so mighty anxious to get killed, if there were any other troops about here moving to the support of the Third Corps, why, you might join them without attracting attention."

"See, colonel!" exclaimed Corporal Snowden, "two divisions of our corps and the Sixth there are just moving toward Little Round Top; we can easily join them."

"Well, if Captain Ellsworth approves, you may go."

"Hurrah for the Colonel!" and with three ringing cheers, the brave boys fell into rank, and with Ellsworth at their head, hastened to join the moving divisions.

In addition to the Sixth Corps, and the two divisions of the Twelfth, Doubleday's division of the First Corps, the Second and part of the Fifth came to the assistance of the Third, and after nearly three hours of the hardest fighting of the war, succeeded in repulsing the enemy, who had at one time gained possession of the summit of Little Round Top.

From this point they were driven by Ellsworth's company and Crawford's division, who, coming up fresh, charged upon them with great fury, drove them down the rocky front of that hill, across the valley below, over the next hill and into the woods beyond, taking over three hundred prisoners.

In this fearful charge it was that Tony Tibbits for the first time in his young life saw what real fighting

was; then it was he learned to love and respect every man with whom his lot had been so suddenly and strangely cast.

He saw Captain Randal Ellsworth cheer on his men, and noted that not for one single instant did he shrink from danger. He saw that the friendly sergeant and corporal were both great warriors, a host in themselves, and that the two O'Briens, Duffy, Phil McGiveney, Tim Cooney, Hughes, Glynn and all the others were in their native element when the fight was hottest and blood was flowing most freely.

Then he forgot everything—everything but the fight, and casting aside his drum, which a half dozen shots had rendered useless, he picked up a rifle, the use of which he well understood, and went in with the rest in dead earnest.

At this time the fighting was fearful in the extreme, and the Union troops were doing terrible work; but the rebel General Barksdale was seen to fall; then thoroughly disheartened and driven back with severe loss, the rebels made no further attempt on the Federal left wing.

But now word was passed that the Twelfth Corps was in danger, and Captain Ellsworth with his company, which had suffered severely, hastened to rejoin his regiment.

It was time.

The rebel commanding general was now determined to break through the right and gain the central one of the valley roads.

The failure of his troops to turn the left, the snatching of the victory, as it were, from their very clutches, and the hurling back of their broken columns, defeated and in confusion, made the case more desperate; and so the attack on Slocum was furious even to madness.

But shortly after Ellsworth's men had joined their regiment the First and Sixth Corps came up to the support of the Twelfth, and sustained it in an unyielding combat.

Until half past nine o'clock the battle raged with unmitigated fierceness, the lines moved to and fro, each in turn advancing and falling back.

At this hour of the night the enemy made his final charge on the left of the right wing held by General Geary's division. He was repulsed with terrible slaughter, and refused to renew the attack.

At ten o'clock the battle ceased, and for a time peaceful quiet reigned over the field of carnage.

Ellsworth's men now had a little time to rest, and Corporal Snowden, placing his hand kindly on Tony's head, said:

"You made no mistake, my brave boy, you were cut out for a soldier, if ever boy was yet."

"Thrue for ye, Corporal Snowden," exclaimed Tim Cooney, who was standing near; "I had me eye on him all through ther foight, an' I predict the b'y will prove an honor to me sagacity; shure there's not a doubt av it."

CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT VICTORY AT GETTYSBURG.

EWELL, operating against the extreme right of the Federals, which had been weakened by the withdrawal of troops sent over to support the left, had succeeded in gaining a foothold within a portion of the Union lines near Spangler's Spring. This was the only advantage obtained by the rebels to compensate them for the terrible disasters of the day, and of this they were destined to be soon deprived.

During the night General Meade, determined to dislodge Ewell from his position, and as a matter of personal honor assigned the task to General Slocum, who had previously held the same place.

A division of the Sixth Corps was stationed on the right of the Twelfth, Slocum's, thus forming the extreme outpost of the right wing. The Fifth Corps was sent over as a reserve, and General Wadsworth's division of the First Corps took position to strengthen Howard's right where it joined Slocum's left.

These were the preliminaries.

The men well knew the fearful called to perform, and nerved their hearts to the perilous task.

The next morning at four o'clock, Slocum's line opened a terrific fire on Ewell's men. The enemy responded in a furious charge—perhaps the most furious ever made on a field of battle.

With fiendish yells and seeming contempt of death, during six full hours, they hurled their solid masses against the well-defended lines.

The Federal troops stood like a wall of fire, whose flaming tongues inwrapped in death whatever came near, whose foundations were as firm as if one with the primal rock on which they rested.

Nothing during the war had equaled this six hours of carnage. In front of Geary's position were more rebel dead than the number of the entire list of casualities in the twelfth corps. They lay in bloody mounds, some pierced with a single bullet-wound, others torn and mangled in the most frightful manner.

Before half-past ten o'clock, Slocum had repulsed and driven back the foe at every point, and reoccupied his original position. As they fell back, a battery on the Baltimore turnpike plowed through the enemy's lines with shot and shell hurled over the heads of the twelfth corps, and made terrible havoc in their ranks.

Ellsworth's brave boys now had a breathing spell, for after the retreat of Ewell's troops to the west and northwest of the town of Gettysburg, the enemy remained quiet till one o'clock in the afternoon, when they opened fire with one hundred and twenty-five to one hundred and fifty guns on the centre and left, the position of General Hancock's corps, which from the want of natural defenses, was the weakest portion of the Federal lines.

The Federal batteries, fully equal in number and caliber, replied promptly, and for the next two hours the earth fairly shook under the feet of the two armies with the terrible concussion.

The air seemed filled with iron missiles, and the forest trees on both sides were riven, torn and splintered, as if struck by lightening.

At last the Federal troops ceased to reply, not from any disposition to yield, or from lack of ammunition, but to compel the rebels to a further demonstration.

They were not slow in making it. Pickett's division, the *elite* of Longstreet's corps, which had not yet been under fire in this battle, was advanced, and supported by three brigades from two divisions of Hill's corps.

They moved steadily forward for nearly half a mile, intending evidently to carry the Federal lines by assault; when having arrived within short range, the artillery opened on them with grape, canister, and shell.

They hesitated for a moment, then with tremendous yells rushed on till, when within a short distance of the lines, they were received with a most deadly and destructive fire of musketry.

Under this they reeled and staggered, and a part rushing up to the Federal lines threw down their arms, and surrendered, while the remainder turned and fled.

Two brigades of Doubleday's division sprang foward, and each captured more than eight hundred prisoners, and the other brigades took considerable numbers. Fifteen stands of colors were also taken by the the Federal troops.

Over one third of the rebels engaged in this assault were left upon the field, and three thousand more were taken prisoners. One of their generals was killed, and four more wounded—two of them mortally.

On the Federal side the loss had been much less, but Major General Hancock and Brigadier General Gibbon were severely, and Generals Warren and Hunt slightly wounded.

Of course this closed the battle in this part of the field, as there was no probability of rallying these broken and disheartened troops for another attack.

But Longstreet had not relinquished the hope of effecting a lodgment of his troops upon Round Top or Little Round Top. Hood's and McLaws' divisions of his corps, while

the fight with the Federal center was progressing, assaulted these points with great vigor in front, and at the same time Longstreet sent an infantry force with two or three batteries, to a point nearly two miles southwest of Round Top, with orders to press foward and turn the flank of the sixth corps, so as to fall upon the Federal rear and secure its trains of ammunition, which were packed behind Round Top.

They were, as they thought, making good progress in this movement, when they suddenly found themselves confronted by two brigades of Kilpatrick's division of cavalry.

A fierce engagement ensued, in which the rebel batteries were silenced, and the infantry driven back to their original position in front of Round Top, and the Pennsylvania Reserves charged upon them, capturing the battery, taking three hundred prisoners, and five thousand stand of arms.

At the same time, General Gregg, with his division of cavalry, who had held a position on the extreme right, crossed the Baltimore and Bonaughtown road, and successfully attacked Stuart's cavalry and Ewell's force on the left and rear.

The great battle was over. Thwarted at every point, his efforts to penetrate and destroy the Federal army all defeated, with nearly one third of his whole force either killed or prisoners, his ammunition and supplies nearly exhausted, the rebel commanding general sullenly drew back to his intrenchments, and ordered the gathering up of such of his wounded as could be most readily moved. The rebel troops which had hitherto occupied the town and the tract southeast of it, moved during the night to Seminary ridge.

During the same night, the Federal army, worn out with the stress of the terrible combat, bivouacked in its position; the men dropping in their places and sleeping.

Before the sun rose on the morning of the fourth, Lee had decamped with his whole army toward the Potomac.

Details of Federal soldiers were at once made to bury the dead. Along the Union lines and down the slope in front, especially in front of the point where Ellsworth's men had been stationed, the ground was strewn with corpses, many of them already blackened and swollen, some still in striking attitudes. Here a soldier had evidently been engaged in trying to save the life of a wounded comrade by binding a handkerchief about the shattered limb, but was shot, and, falling on his wounded companion, both had died together.

Tony, who with Corporal Snowden had accompanied the detail from his regiment, beheld this and many other fearful spectacles, and as he gazed about him he could have recognized the truthfulness of the picture drawn by a certain officer there.

"I could imagine," he said, "nothing more terrible than the silent indications of agony that marked the features of the pale corpses which lay at every step. Though dead and rigid in every muscle, they still writhed and seemed to turn to catch the passing breeze for a cooling breath. Staring eyes, gaping mouth, clinched hands, and straugly contracted limbs, seemingly drawn into the smallest compass as if by a mighty effort to rend asunder some irresistible bond which held them down to the torture of which they died.

"One sat against a tree, and, with mouth and eyes wide open, looked up into the sky as if to catch a glimpse of its own fleeting spirit. Another clutched the branch of an overhanging tree, and hung half suspended, as if in death he had raised himself partly from the ground. Another had grasped his faithful musket, and the compression of his mouth told of a determination which would have been fatal to a foe had life ebbed a minute later. Another clung with both hands to a bayonet which was buried in the ground. Great numbers lay in heaps, just as the fire of the artillery mowed them down, mangled their forms into almost indistinguishable mass."

Tony Tibbits saw all this and more. No wonder then, taking into consideration all he had previously passed through on that bloody field, since leaving the farmer's house, that, at one bound, so to speak, he became transformed from a diffident country boy to a brave and thorough soldier.

CHAPTER VII.

GILES GRIPPER GETS INTO HOT WATER.

For two days after the battle the greater part of the Federal army remained on the field of Gettysburg, and the Twentieth Connecticut Volunteers, the regiment of which Randal Ellsworth's company formed a part, occupied a position near the spot where Tony Tibbits had first found it.

The boy had quickly won his way to the heart of every member of the company, they would gladly have made a pet of him had he not resented the idea and shown them conclusively that he wanted to be treated as a man, and do a man's whole duty.

This manly bearing of the brave young drummer boy only increased the love and respect his comrades felt for him, and so, by the time the great battle was fairly fought and won, they were ready to do anything in the world for him.

It was the second day after the battle, all the work assigned to the Twentieth had been performed and Ellsworth's boys, in common with the rest of the regiment, were "taking things easy."

Tony, Joe O'Brien, Jim Keegan, and one or two others, were lying in the shade of a clump of trees, at the rear of the camp, and at some distance from the rest.

Suddenly, on looking up, Tony saw two persons advancing to their quarters, one from his neat uniform it was easy to see was the orderly of some general, the other wore the plain clothes of a country farmer.

As the boy caught sight of the latter's face he uttered an exclamation of alarm.

His comrades turned quickly and asked to know what was the matter.

"Gripper," gasped Tony, "he's come to take me away."

"Where is the griper?" demanded Jim Keegan savagely. "Just let me get a-hold of him, and I'll show him what a griper is."

"Don't talk so loud, Jim," whispered Tony, "he'll hear you and then it will be all day with me—sure."

"Pshaw!" laughed Jimmy, "don't bother your head about him, the boys never'll let him get away with you in the world."

"I don't know about that," muttered Tony, with a sorrowful shake of the head, "I'm worth a good deal to him and he won't go away without me if he can possibly help himself."

"Ah! but that's just it—he *can't* help himself."

"Hark!" exclaimed Joe, "there's Snowden, Larry, and Tim Cooney, the farmer and orderly are going to speak to them. Let's hear what they've got to say," and cautiously bending forward, they all listened.

"Corporal, here's a man who wants to see your captain—Ellsworth I believe," said the orderly. "He has particular business with him."

"Ah!" responded Snowden, who at once suspected the farmer's identity, "very sorry that Captain Ellsworth is not about—off on special service, you know."

"Well, I suppose one of lieutenants would do as well," suggested the orderly.

"That's bad again, our first lieutenant was seriously wounded in the late battle and is now in hospital, the second lieutenant is busy making out a report and as he don't like the business, and has got the temper of a fiend, it would be about as much as any man's life is worth to disturb him."

"Oh Lord! don't disturb him on any account then," exclaimed the farmer hastily.

"Hum," said the orderly, "at least you must have some officer about who can give the man the information he seek. Of course its no business of mine, but you see, I was sent by General Slocum, and I dare say he'll want me to make some kind of a report. Where's your first Sergeant—Thompson, Brown, or whatever his name is?"

"It happens to be Small—Peter Small, since the charge we made on Little Round Top, when the rebels

held possession of the summit there."

"Ah! your orderly was killed then?"

"Yes, and Sergeant Small was promoted to be orderly Sergeant, and I was advanced a peg or two myself. Peter's first sergeant, and I'm first corporal now."

"Well, can we see Sergeant Small?"

"Why—yes, I think so." Then turning to Tim Cooney with a sly wink,

"Tim, old boy, go fetch the sergeant.—But wait a moment; who shall I say wants to see him?"

"Giles Gripper," answered the farmer, "and you may as well say that I've come about a boy, who, I understand, has enlisted in this company—the little scamp want's to rob me of his time—the rascally villain."

"Oh, the dhirty spalpeen!" exclaimed Tim, "Phat's the name ov him?"

"Tony Tibbets," answered the farmer, "and he's no more fit to go to war than I am—no! I don't mean that—than my old woman is."

"Well, sor, I'll call the sergeant—and a few more besides, I'm thinkin'" muttered Tim, *sotto voce*, as he moved away.

"Have you such a boy in your company as he describes, corporal?" asked the orderly.

"Let me see," mused Snowden, "Tibbits—Tony Tibbits. About how old should you say, sir?"

"Wal, may be fourteen," said the farmer, "p'r'aps a leetle more."

"Hum! I fancy there was a boy of that description who came into our quarters during the night, after the first day's fight."

"Ah! and he's with you now?" said the orderly quickly.

"It may be so."

"Then, Mr. Gripper," continued the orderly, turning to the farmer, "I don't see as I can be of any further use to you, and so, as I've much to look after, at headquarters, I'll bid you good day. Good day, corporal, good day, comrades," and he was gone.

"Nice likely fellow, that," said the farmer approvingly; "reckon he'll be a general some day, sure."

"Very likely," replied Snowden dryly, "that's the kind of timber the government makes generals out of," and he cast a furtive glance in the direction Tim had taken.

But Tim did not seem to be in any hurry to return, neither did Sergeant Small show up."

Farmer Gripper began to grow impatient.

"What in thunder's the matter with all you sojers?" he growled, "a pesky lazy lot seems ter me."

"Don't get impatient, sir," said Corporal Snowden meaningly, "Perhaps the sergeant will get here quite as soon as you'll care to see him, after all."

"What's that you say?"

The corporal drew nearer, and gazed earnestly into his face.

"The more I look at you," he said gravely," the better I am satisfied that I've heard of you before."

"What d'ye mean, sir?" asked Gripper with a bewildered and startled look.

"O, nothing—that is, you'll learn fast enough when the sergeant comes."

"Good Lord! what mess have I got into now?" groaned the unhappy farmer.

The corporal with an impenetrable look, shook his head.

"Why the deuce don't yer speak?" snapped Gripper. Then brightening up a little, "But confound it all, *I* hain't done nothin', all I want's my boy, an' him I'm goin' ter have, I reckon if there's any law in the land."

Snowden made no answer, and a minute or two later, Sergeant Small and quite a number of the boys came up.

The sergeant had a slip of paper in his hand, which, after regarding the farmer attentively for a moment or so, he referred to,

"Ah! you are Giles Gripper, a farmer in this neighborhood?" he said sharply at last.

"Yes, sir," faltered the poor farmer, who didn't know what to make of what was going on.

"And you gained admission within our lines on the pretext that you wanted to find a boy, who, as I understand it, you claim, was bound to you by the town authorities?"

"Of course, that's it exactly."

"Hum, a very ingenious story, Mr. Gripper."

"What, sir?"

"A very ingenious story, I say. But, sir, let me tell you, we're up to all such dodges. And whatever you've done in other parts of the army, you can't fool us. *We know you.*"

"Good Lord! What do you mean?"

"Mean! What do you suppose we mean? We understand your little game—that's all. The fact is, you've played it once too often."

"Played it too often? Played *what* too often?"

"This lost boy business. We know what your real business is within our lines."

"Sir!"

"How much did you expect to get from Lee for the information, you were going to send him to-day, eh?"

For a moment the poor farmer seemed completely dumbfounded. At length he managed to gasp out!

"Lee! I never had any thing to do with Lee in all my life. What're you drivin' at, any way?"

"Of course you deny it, but we understand, don't we, boys?"

"Of course, of course," went up from the attentive crowd.

"You understand, do you?" exclaimed the farmer fiercely, "then what d'ye take me for, any way?"

"A spy! a spy!" shouted the boys.

"Yes," added Snowden, "and the worst kind of a spy too; for he would have betrayed us when we had just saved his home and fields from pillage, think of it!"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FARMER IS TRIED, AND SENTENCED TO BE BURRIED ALIVE.

"That's a durned lie any how," exclaimed the farmer angrily, "yer didn't save either ther house or fields from pillage, an' ther very wust thieves that carried off my property war men, who claimed ter be Union soldiers."

"Well," said the sergeant, "if any men have misconducted themselves about your place they were not Union soldiers, though they may have pretended to be such. But that's not to the point, the question now is, what punishment shall we inflict on you—a miserable spy."

"It's a durned lie, I tell yer," cried the farmer, "I'm as good a Union as any o' yer, and love my country just as well."

"Ah, phat are ye givin' us, yer dirty divil?" growled Tim. "If ye war that, ye'd be in the army, wearin' a blue coat, an' wid a good musket or rifle over your shoulder, so yer would."

"Everybody can't fight," retorted Gripper, "some must stay home, and raise stuff for you sojers ter eat."

"Arroh, go 'way wid yer, there'd always be cowards enough for ther likes o' that."

"Sergeant," said Larry O'Brien, suddenly and in a serious tone, "I'd just like to know what all this talk is about any way. This man is either a spy or he is not a spy. If the first, he ought to be hung at once, if the last, we ought to send him home to his old woman with the least possible delay."

"That's the talk! that's the talk!" went up from a dozen approving voices.

"Then I reckon yer'd better let me go right straight away," exclaimed the farmer eagerly.

"Hold up! Not so fast, my man," said the sergeant sternly. "Tim, are all the witnesses here?"

"Yes, sir, ivery mother's son av thim."

"Then bring up the first."

"Here he is, sor, John Faulkner, who, loike ther great Gineral Washington himself, niver told a loi."

"John," said the sergeant, in a magisterial tone, "do you know the prisoner at the bar?—Ahem! I wish to goodness there *was* a bar here,—I say, do you know him?"

"I do, sir," responded Johnny promptly.

"Where did you ever see him before?"

"Down by the spring yonder, just before dark last evening."

"Ah! And what was he doing there?"

"He was whispering to a soldier."

"He was! Anything else?"

"I saw him offering the soldier money."

"Oho! trying to corrupt one of our noble comrades. But of course the brave defender of our country rejected the filthy lucre with scorn, eh?"

"Not much, sir; he pocketed the greenback so quick it fairly made me wink."

"Ah! I see, the prisoner is an old sinner. He knows how to corrupt the innocent."

At this point the boys, with one accord, sent up a dismal groan—they saw no chance of being "corrupted" just then.

"Is that all, John?" asked the sergeant. "Didn't you catch any words that passed between the plotters?"

"O yes, sir, I heard this man say, 'you must find a chance to smuggle me in some time to-night,' and the soldier said, 'that may be difficult,' then, after a moments thought, this one said something about bringing some one out to him."

"I see, I see!" exclaimed the sergeant; "there was another, probably an officer, concerned in the plot. Is that all?"

"Yes, sir."

"Step down—that is, stand to one side. Bring on the next witness, sheriff—I mean Tim."

"Here he is, sir, Billy Duffy."

"Well, William, look upon the prisoner and tell me, did you ever see his face before?"

"Think I have, yer honor," answered Billy, carelessly.

"Ah! when and where?"

"He was jumping bounties in Connecticut, more than a year ago."

"Ah-h-h!" exclaimed the sergeant.

"O-o-o!" groaned the boys, and a look of bewildered astonishment settled on the face of the farmer.

"Are you quite sure of what you say?" asked the sergeant, seriously.

"Oh, yes," answered Billy, "I remember him well. I have good cause to—he picked my pocket of a heavy gold hunting-case watch over on Grapevine Point one day."

"He did?"

"Yes, indeed, sir. You remember that watch, Jim Pender—the one I lent you the night you went courting the Hillhouse avenue girl?"

"Oh, yes," said Jim, with an honest look, "I remember it very well."

"Well, that's the watch he robbed me of, and I swore I'd be even with him some day, and now the time has come."

"Look-a-here," cried Gripper nervously, "what's all this nonsense you're a gettin' off? I never was in that miserable little State of Connecticut in all my life, and what's more, never expect to be there, either."

"You're more than half right, anyway, I suspect, old man," said Larry O'Brien, with a chuckle; "the fact is, you won't live to get so far as Connecticut."

"What's that you say?"

"Silence in the court!" said Sergeant Small, sternly. "Go on with your testimony, Mr. Duffy."

"Am I to tell all I to tell all I know about the prisoner?"

"Certainly, everything."

"Well, sir, this man is not at all what he seems."

"What! how's that?"

"He is acting a part when he claims to be a farmer. He was acting a part when he was in Connecticut, more than a year ago."

"Acting a part! who is he then?"

"In point of fact, he's a lieutenant-general in the Confederate army!"

"Oh, what a lie!" groaned Gripper.

"And the bosom friend of General Lee," added Duffy.

"That's another whopper; never saw Lee in all my life, I tell yer."

"This is getting serious," said the sergeant, with a solemn shake of the head. "Are you sure of what you say, comrade?"

"Certainly," was Billy's unblushing answer; "and it so happens I am able to fully account for his being here at this moment."

"We are listening."

"Well, sir, it grew out of a serious conference between him and Lee. He saw that the South could never whip us in the regular way, and at length told Lee so. Then when the rebel commander-in-chief acknowledged that he was right, and asked him what he would advise, he said:

"'Let some officer with a pleasing person and good address disguise himself as a substantial Pennsylvania farmer, and make his way into the Union lines. Then let him pick out some boy and claim him as his or bound apprentice, and get away with him. When he's secured the first in this way, let him go back and secure another and another, using a different disguise each time, if he likes. In that way, don't you see, we can soon carry off the whole Union army, and at no great risk of being shot, either, which is a consideration worthy of attention.'"

"You are the worst liar I ever heard!" said the astonished farmer.

"Sir!" said Billy, with dignity.

"Go on, Mr. Duffy," commanded the sergeant, "and tell us what General Lee said to the prisoner's suggestion."

"He said, as he grasped the prisoner's hand: 'my dear general, I like your idea very much; but where in the world can we find just the right man—I mean with a pleasing person and good address? for in truth these things do count with the Yankees, there's no denying it.'

"And then our friend here straightened himself up and striking his manly bosom with his shapely right hand, said:

"'General Lee, I am not, I believe, a vain man, but I know my merits, both of person and mind. If I am handsome, 'tis as God made me, and as for my address, deign to remember that I have always associated with gentlemen. In short, I am just the man you want; I will undertake the important mission. One by one I will bring off the whole Union army, I swear it!'"

"Good heavens, what an awful plot!" exclaimed the sergeant, rolling his eyes upward in holy horror.

"Terrible!" murmured Snowdon and O'Brien.

The rest of the boys indulged in another dismal groan.

"You understand it all now," Duffy continued, "Lee gladly accepted his proposition and so you see how he happens to be among us. I tell you, sergeant and comrades, this thing strikes right home to us. After carrying off the Lord only knows how many of our brave boys, he undertakes to deplete our own company!"

"Ah! I see—I understand," exclaimed the sergeant, "and of course he's communicating with Lee all the time, eh?"

"O, of course," said Billy, readily taking the hint, "and there's where more of his ingenious and diabolical work comes in. How do you think he does it?"

"Hum, can't say. Evidently he's got a head capable of plotting any deviltry."

"You're right there, as I shall presently prove."

"We're listening."

"Well he has a curious mongrel cur that follows him about wherever he goes, and when he's got anything to communicate to his chief, he writes it on thin paper, crams the paper into a piece of meat, makes the dog swallow it whole, and posts him off to find Lee, who, knowing the dodge, gives the cur an emetic, and so makes him throw up his dispatches."

Another groan from all the boys.

"Sergeant with all due deference, I think we've heard enough to condemn a dozen spies," said Corporal Snowden solemnly.

"Indeed we have," assented the grave judge. "And now the only thing left for us to do is to pass sentence."

"Of course."

"And that sentence must be——"

"Death!" exclaimed the boys in a breath.

"Ah! but this is an aggravated case," said Steve Hughes. "Hanging's too good for such a man."

"You're quite right, Steve," nodded the sergeant. "By what death shall he die then?"

There was a moment of unbroken silence, and all looked toward Billy Duffy.

"I have it!" exclaimed Billy at last. "Let's bury him alive!"

"The very thing!" shouted the boys. "We'll bury the old spy alive!"

CHAPTER IX.

POOR GRIPPER FINDS HIS WAY TO THE BOTTOMLESS PIT.

"Let a dozen set to work at once and dig a grave," commanded the sergeant.

The boys rushed away with a shout and the farmer pleaded in vain for a delay.

"Yer all wrong. I'm as good a man as any ov yer," he moaned. Then with another gasp, "Oh! what'll ther old woman say when she hears of it!"

But it was all of no use, the digging went on steadily and soon the grave was ready. Then they led the unhappy man to its brink.

"Giles Gripper, have you anything to say before we proceed to carry out the just sentence that has been pronounced against you?" asked the sergeant gravely.

The farmer gazed upon the unfriendly faces in the crowd which surrounded him, looked down into the gaping grave at his feet, gave a profound sigh, and then blurted out:

"Go on with yer durned old funeral; reckon as how it'll save me burial expenses, any way."

"What a hardened sinner!" groaned Corporal Snowden.

"What a precious old file!" muttered Billy Duffy.

"Better blindfold him, sergeant," suggested Jim Pender.

"Of course," and a handkerchief was tightly bound over his eyes, effectually shutting out all light.

The miserable man was then lowered into the narrow grave, and dirt thrown upon him.

"He's gone off the handle, boys!" exclaimed Duffy suddenly.

"Sure!" asked the sergeant anxiously.

"Yes, look for yourself."

The sergeant let himself down into the grave and carefully examined the victim.

"Only fainted," he said at last. "But it's a dead faint, that is certain."

"Then hustle him out lively and let's sew him up in the blanket and take him to that confoundedly dark cave that Johnny Loftus discovered. He'll think sure that he's in his grave or the bottomless pit when he comes to there."

"You're right Billy," exclaimed Ed. Lillie, "and we'll have just loads and loads of fun—you bet."

Poor Gripper was now lifted out of the grave, and his arms folded across his breast, were tied in that position, his feet were also tied together. He was then wrapped up in an army blanket, which was secured by strings, the bandage, of course, was still left over his eyes.

"Now, then," said Duffy, when all their arrangements were completed, "let's take him to the cave, it's more like a grave than anything else, and we can all set around and wake the corpse."

"Agreed!" and the unconscious farmer was conveyed to a low and dark cave at no great distance, where he was carefully lain upon the ground.

"Now then," said Joe O'Brien, "let's go away and leave him to himself for awhile."

"No, no! what's the use of that?" exclaimed Duffy, "Let's stay right here. If we fasten a blanket over the entrance, he can't see us, even if we take the bandage from his eyes."

"That's so," said the corporal, "and if we stay and keep mighty quiet, we shall soon hear what he thinks of death and the other world."

"That's all right," said Duffy; "but I propose to get even more fun than that out of him. But you shall see for yourselves. Now then, hang up a blanket, some of you, you can drive a peg or two into the cracks over the entrance there easy enough. The rest sit down and keep quiet; he may come round at any moment now."

Nearly the whole company had by this time crowded its way into the cave, which was by no means a large one. The blanket was at last suspended over the opening, and every ray of light shut out, then Duffy removed the handkerchief from the farmer's eyes.

"Now," he whispered, "keep quiet ever mother's son of you; he'll be coming round before you know it, and I don't want the fun spoiled."

The boys fixed themselves the best way they could, and waited in anxious expectancy.

Minute after minute passed, and still the farmer showed no signs of returning life.

"Be ther powers!" muttered Tim, at last, "af he don't come round purty quick, oi shall think ther divil has got him sure."

"Hist! Tim," whispered Billy warningly, "he's just moved his head, not a word—not a sound now!"

At that moment the farmer uttered a dismal moan, then, in a measure, his faculties seemed to be restored to him.

"Good Lord! where am I?" he exclaimed in a scarcely audible whisper. Then, after a moment:

"Ah! I remember now, them confounded soldiers buried me alive! Oh, Lord! what will become of ther old woman?"

Then, after another pause, and in an aggravated tone.

"Ah! I know what'll become of her fast enough, she'll up and marry Hans Frager, my hired man. I've noticed she's felt er sort o' sneakin' kindness for him for some time. But won't I haunt 'em if she does! That is, if I ——

"Lord! how dark it is here, an' how tight they crowded the earth down onter me. I can't move a peg. I'd scarcely know I'd got any body—Thunder! p'r'aps I hain't! Why, of course not! that is, I'm jist a spirit fastened up here somehow—new born, so ter speak. But where am I? can this be —."

"Hell!" exclaimed Duffy, in a deep hollow voice.

"Oh, Lord!" groaned poor Gripper, and again, from very fright, he became unconscious.

This the boys quickly discovered, and some were for ending the farce before it became a tragedy. But Duffy pleaded for a little more fun and agreed, if the rest would see him through it, to land the farmer plump in his own bed before he awoke to the fact that he was still in the land of the living.

"Well, have it your own way," said Sergeant Small, but keep quiet now he's coming round again."

At that moment the farmer uttered a weary sigh, and then seemed to be intently listening.

"I heard it—I surely heard it," he at length muttered, "some dark spirit—probably the evil one himself answered my very thoughts, and told me I was in hell! can it be possible! Is this indeed the bottomless pit into which all the wicked are cast?"

"It is! said Duffy, in the same deep hollow voice in which he had before spoken.

"Oh, Lord!" groaned the unhappy victim, "and why am I here? I've been a church member for years and years."

"Yes, and a most infernal hypocrite too," said Billy.

"But—but—I was as good as most of my neighbors."

"That, as you very well know, is no excuse, when death comes every tub must stand on its own bottom."

"But what did I do while on earth that was so awful bad?"

"You were not a poor man were you?"

"N-no—not so *very* poor."

"Wasn't you quite well off? Didn't you own a good farm, free and clear from all incumbrance? wasn't it well stocked? and hadn't you a snug little sum in the bank besides?"

"Ye—ye—yes, I suppose all that's true."

"And can you point to one single charitable act that you have ever performed? Where is the widow whom you have ever befriended? Where is the orphan you have ever succored? Where—"

"Hold up, Mr. Devil, I befriended one orphan any way—Tony Tibbits, I give him a good home, an' made a regular pet on him—me an' my wife."

"Giles Gripper," said Billy, in his most terrible tone of voice, "do you presume to think that you can de-

ceive *me?* *You* befriend Tony Tibbits. *You* give him a good home. *You* make a pet of him. Why, you worked the poor boy almost to death, in fact, made him do a strong man's work, that's the way you befriended him. You and your wife made a regular drudge of him in the house, fed him on your leavings, and made him sleep in an old tumble down shed, that's the home you gave him, and as for clothes, you never allowed him but one poor suit at a time, for every day and Sunday, so that when that one was stolen, your wife was obliged to steal a wounded drummer's uniform to replace it with, and you never give him a dime of spending money in your life—*that's* the kind of pet you made of him. Pah! I can't bear to talk with you. Beelzebub, old fellow, just stir up the big brimstone fire, we must give our new friend *a warm reception*—a sort of foretaste of the comforts he is to enjoy among us."

"Oh Lord!" gasped Gripper, with another moan, and again he became unconscious.

CHAPTER X.

GENERAL LEE HAS AN INTERVIEW WITH MRS. GRIPPER.

"Now then," said Duffy, hurriedly, "I've got something here that one of you must help me to make him swallow. It will keep him in a drowsy state for the next four or five hours, and by that time, I promise you, we shall be well rid of him. Pull down the blanket, Steve."

The blanket was pulled down, and the dose—whatever it was, administered.

"Now then," said Bill, "we'll leave him where he is till night; and then half a dozen of our best fellows shall see the play out."

About an hour after dark, Billy Duff, Jim Peuder, Steve Hughes, Tim Cooney and the two Johnnies, as John Doftus and John Faulkner were called, silently entered the cave.

"Here he is, all right boys," whispered Billy, after feeling around for some time, "and as quiet as a fresh corpse, my dose worked beautifully."

"'Tis yerself that can do it, Bill Duffy," said Tim admiringly.

"You bet," laughed Billy, "and now the question is, how shall we get him home?"

That's easily answered," Johnny Loftus, "just lift him on my back, I can carry him and not half try."

"I believe you, and that I think will be the best way, at least you can carry him till you get a little tired, and then Steve and Tim can have a go at it."

"Pooh!" said Loftus contemptuously, "just lift him up, will you?"

The unconscious farmer was boosted into position and the squad started off.

"You fixed it all right to get through the lines, Billy?" said Pender.

"Yes, of course, come ahead," and they hurried on toward the road.

Having passed the wondering sentinels, they kept on until they had almost reached Gripper's house, when Billy brought the squad to a halt.

"Now you fellows wait here," he said, until you see that the coast is clear—that is until you see the old woman start off around the house with me, then take the old man in. You know where his bedroom is Jim, Tony told you. When you find it, strip him and put him to bed, then make yourselves scarce as soon as possible. But if you hear him call out—'Hold on boys, don't shoot!' why, come to me. Do you understand?"

"Yes, all right,—drive ahead, and Billy advanced to the front door and gave a loud knock.

Mrs. Gripper did not keep him long waiting. She was anxiously expecting word from her husband and Tony, and thinking a message of some kind had come from them, hastened to open the door.

"Who be yer?" she instantly demanded on seeing Billy.

"Hist!" he replied warningly, "Can I trust you, madam?"

"Trust me? of course yer can—if yer pay me fur keeping yer secret."

"Ah! mercenary woman! But no matter, let it be as you say. I will tell you my awful secret and pay you for keeping it—But please step this way."

"Why, what d'ye want me ter come out there fur, I'd like ter know?"

"There may be some one listening about here. Ain't there some one in the house?"

"No—that is nobody but Hans, our hired man. He's kinder been lookin' after things about ther house since my old man started out ter find our bound boy."

"Hum, Hans, eh? Perhaps you'd better call him out too—if he can be trusted."

"Lors-a-me! Of course he can, sartin sure, I'll answer for it."

"Then call him."

"Hans! Hans! come here, you're wanted," and presently a sturdy looking young Pennsylvania Dutchman made his appearance in the doorway."

"Now, then, sir," said the woman. "what have you to say to us?"

"Where's your barn?" asked Billy.

"Over there," was the answer.

"Come and point it out to me."

"Why, if you just go round the other side of the house, you can see it easy enough."

"I dare say; but I'd much rather you two would show me, and then Hans must go to it with me."

"Dot vos all right," said Hans. "Gome on, Mrs. Gribber," and so the three moved around the corner of the house together.

Here Duffy brought them to a stand and held their attention.

"Before we go any further," he said, "I ought to tell you who I really am; for my conscience would not permit me to deceive you in this matter and get you into trouble unwittingly."

"Ah, that's right, that's fair, sir," exclaimed the curious woman, "and now for the land's sake who be yer, anyhow?"

"Hist! not so loud; don't give it away for the world. Let me whisper it in your ear. I'm—can I trust you?"

"Of course yer can. Come, do tell us if yer ever goin' ter."

"Ah, dear madam, my heart almost fails me. Suppose you should be tempted to send word to General Meade, what would become of me then?"

"Good heavens, what can the man mean? What in the world is he driving at?. Hans, can you make out?"

"Nein, I have not understand," answered the Dutchman, stoically.

"No more can I; do tell us, sir."

"Once more then, madam, listen," and putting his lips close to her ears, he whispered: "I am General Lee! Now don't, *don't* give it away, I beg."

"General Lee! Good Lord!" exclaimed the woman, starting back aghast.

"There, I told you just how it would be," said Duffy, bitterly. "You'll have a whole troop of Yankees down upon me in less than no time, and. then I shall be hung, perhaps drawn and quartered."

"Oh, Hans, Hans, what shall we do with him?" asked the bewildered woman.

"I have not know," replied the man, "unless you vos took him in an' give him somedings to eat."

"That's it," she exclaimed, brightening up; "you want your supper, sir, then we can talk afterwards."

"Ah, dear madam, how thoughtful—how kind! just as that sweet child Tony said I should find you."

"What! you know where that little scamp Tony is?"

"Don't say scamp, dear madam; I have heard him say how he loved you; I have heard his pitiable story."

"Ah, and what is his story?"

"After delivering the message with which he was intrusted he started to return home and lost his way. He was then taken in charge by a Union picket, and held by them until the next day, when the boy, picket and all were captured by my men, and he is now a prisoner in our hands."

"An' so ther rebels have really got him, have they?"

With great dignity:

"He is a prisoner in the hands of the *Confederates*, ma'am."

"O, I beg pardon, I'm sure. You've really got him though? An' ain't yer goin' ter give him up ter me?"

"Do you really wish it?"

"Of course I do."

"Then it shall be so. The moment I again reach my army I will send him to you, with a pair of beautiful diamond earrings, which I shall beg you to accept as a memento of this interesting occasion."

"You're very kind, General, an' I thank yer a thousand times. But, mercy me! now that I look at yer, how is it that you're wearin' a blue uniform! an' I thought General Lee had a gray beard?"

"Ah, I foresaw that you would ask those questions. The fact is, madam, that I was most anxious to know whether Meade was likely to follow me up promptly after his victory, or let me get back into Virginia at my leisure, and in my own way; and as this information was of the utmost importance to me, I resolved to obtain it myself; so I borrowed this uniform from one of my prisoners, shaved off my beard, and entered the Union lines; and now comes the unpleasant part of my story."

"Do let's hear it, General, I'm awfully interested."

"It leaked out through the prisoner whose uniform I wear that I had left the Confederate lines in disguise. Some Yankee spies got hold of it and at once reported to Meade, and now his troops are scouring the country for me. I may be taken at any moment—indeed, if you do not use the utmost caution, I may be taken before your very eyes."

"General Lee, I would——"

"Ah, Madam, what have you done? You have betrayed me. See, yonder comes a squad of the enemy. Hold on, boys! don't shoot! I—I surrender!"

The boys, who had succeeded in getting the old man into his bed, and were now making toward the road, on hearing Duffy's voice, turned, and at once hastened toward him.

"You surrender, do you?" said Jim Pender, who quickly took the cue.

"Yes, comrade; and I will cheerfully bear testimony before General Meade that it was you who captured me. Ah! it isn't every day that you take such an illustrious prisoner as General Lee."

"That's so, General, you never made a truer remark. But we can't stay here all night; so come on," and after a sad good bye to Mrs. Gripper and Hans, the great Confederate general started off with his captors.

CHAPTER XI.

MRS. GRIPPER AND HANS ARE FRIGHTENED BY THE FARMER'S SHOT.

"Hans what a great pity it is that them soldiers came just as they did," said Mrs. Gripper regretfully, as she started slowly toward the house.

"Why vos dot?" asked Hans.

"Why, don't you see, if we had only got him safely into the barn, you could have run off to the other general—Meade, and then we should have got a big reward, p'r'haps four or five thousand dollars, then if my old man didn't come back, you and I could have settled right down here in mighty comfortable shape, and if he did, why we could have pulled up stakes an' gone off together."

"Yaw," grunted Hans.

"Five thousand dollars is a good deal of money, Hans," persisted the old woman.

"Yaw."

By this time they had entered the house, and on Hans hinting that he would like a leetle somedings more to eat, Mrs. Gripper bestirred herself, and soon placed a piece of cold spare-rib, some potatoes, bread and pie on the table, and begged him to draw up and help himself.

When it came to the matter of eating, Hans was in no way "backward in coming forward," he drew his chair up to the table, seized knife and fork, and went to work with alacrity and enthusiasm.

To see him one would think he had not tasted food in twenty-four hours, and would have been incredulous when informed that he had eaten a hearty supper only a little before sun-down.

For some time Mrs. Gripper watched the stalwart feeder in silence. At length she burst out—

"Ah! Hans, how you *do* enjoy my victuals."

"Yaw," grunted the young Dutchman, with his mouth full.

"You know when good cookin's set before you," she proceeded.

"You shust pet."

Tenderly:

"Ah, Hans, how I should love to cook for you all your life!"

"Dot vos all righd, Mrs. Gribber."

"You would really like it too?"'

"You vos know your peesness, Mrs. Gribber, you vos geep der house in goot shape, you vos set er goot dable. Dot vos all righd."

"And — and — Hans, you would *really* like to live with me always?"

"I vos willin', if der old man bays me all righd."

"Ah, but if he don't come home again, Hans.—And really, I don't think he will now. I'm quite sure some accident has happened to him. He must have got killed by mistake, either by the Union men or rebels, otherwise, he would have been home before this."

"Dot vos so," said Hans slowly. "Der old man don't vos like ter pe out all nights."

"Yes," exclaimed the woman eagerly, "and so, if he don't come, just see how nice we can have everything, you'll take charge of the farm, and I'll make the butter and cheese, and cook for you."

"Dot vos goot. An' how much vos you bay me, Mrs. Gribber?"

"Why — why—don't you understand, Hans? I—I—thought you liked me, that—that you loved me, and so—and so we'd get married, don't you see?"

"O, dot vos it, hey?"

"Why, yes; and then, don't you see, we'd own everything together, and we could live much cheaper as man and wife. Just come and see our bedroom. I think you have never been in it yet."

Slowly raising from his seat, and casting a regretful glance at the remnants of the spare-rib (the potatoes, bread and pie were all gone), Hans followed her into her sleeping apartment.

"Wait a moment," she said softly, "let me bring a light."

"Yaw," he grunted.

She returned to the dining room, and snatching up the lamp which still stood on the table, hastened back.

As she entered the bedroom, and put her arm lovingly around the Dutchman's waist, in order to draw him further into the room, a deep groan, which seemed to come from the corner beyond the bed, startled them both, and made the woman drop the light, which, fortunately, was extinguished without doing any harm.

"Ter duyfel!" exclaimed Hans, "vot vos dot?"

"Merciful heavens! pardon me, a miserable sinner," moaned Mrs. Gripper. "It's my old man's ghost come back on earth to haunt me. I know it is."

"Ter duyfel!" again ejaculated Hans. "A ghost! shust let me get out of dis, righd away, pooty quick," and he made for the point where he supposed the door ought to be, and tumbling over a chair, pitched head forward into a closet, filled with the loving Mrs. Gripper's wardrobe, among which he became so entangled that he found it difficult to extricate himself.

Meantime, Mrs. Gripper had become bewildered, and falling backwards over a stool, had come down so emphatically upon a somewhat dilipated cane-bottom chair, that she had gone clean through it, and so was imprisoned there—shut up like a jack-knife, so to speak.

Now all this noise and confusion had the effect of rousing the drowsy farmer, and suddenly he started up in bed.

"Oh, darkness impenetrable!" he moaned, "not a ray of light, not a shadow of hope! And this is hell!"

The woman uttered a scream—not a particularly low one—she was not in a position to give full play to her lungs. And Hans, in a muffled voice, from among the skirts and petticoats, grunted out:

"Ter duyfel!"

Gripper heeded them not, even if he heard them, he probably supposed the cries came from some other lost spirits, and so went on:

"Oh, why wasn't I a better man while on earth, then I might have been in the kingdom of light now, and not chained down here in the pit of darkness and despair."

Then something seemed to come back to his memory.

"Ah! he said, the evil one himself, that was—that I must be burned, and he sent Beelzebub to stir up the fire, I wonder if he's got it hot enough, and when he's coming for me?"

"Oh, Lord! what misery. What horror! And then ter think that my old womans's enjoying everything I left behind me on earth—p'r'aps is married to that Hans Træger before this. She wouldn't waste any time about it, *I* know.

"But jist let her do it, an' I'll haunt 'em both, every time ther devil will give me a day off, an' I hope that'll be purty often. Jist let me get at 'em now!"

"Lord, no, Giles! don't come a near me. Jist rest quiet in yer grave, can't yer, an' let us alone."

"Who—who spoke?" gasped Gripper wonderingly, "that sounded like Nancy's voice."

"Of course it's me, Giles, an' I think y'er pesky mean ter come back here au' bother me, jist 'cause I want er nuther husband now you're dead. Why can't yer rest quiet in yer grave, like any decent man? I'm sure if I was dead you'd marry again fast enough. How long would it be, I'd like ter know, before the widow Bangs, ther bold ugly thing, would be a-standing in my old shoes?" And in her anger she tried te extricate herself from her uncomfortable position, and, naturally, upset the chair.

In falling, her head came in violent contact with Hans' overloaded stomach. Not being able to see, and with his mind full of ghosts and supernatural apparitions, the Dutchman supposed, of course, that the enraged shade of the farmer had come to take vengeance on him for the tender passion he had inspired in the bosom of his widow. So he at once set up a howl of fright, and began kicking vigorously with his big feet, his arms being so entangled that he could not use them.

But his feet did fearful execution, they soon knocked to pieces the chair he had tumbled over, and then tearing through Mrs. Gripper's dress and skirts, sadly bashed her shins, and made her fairly howl with pain.

Meanwhile, firmly persuaded that he was among the lost spirits, all this seemed perfectly natural to Gripper, who remembered that he had always heard while on earth that Hades was anything but a quiet place.

And now a new fancy took possession of him—probably the effects of Duffy's dose, which must have left his throat dry, and an unpleasant taste in his mouth.

"Water! water!" he cried, "oh! I'm burning up inside, fire consumes me. I'm in agony—agony!"

"Poor old critter," murmured Mrs. Gripper, for the moment forgetting her own pains.

"Ter duyfels! Why don't dot ghost geep quiet und go avay, I vos like to know?"

"Water! wa—"

At that moment there came a thundering knock on the outside door.

"Oh, Lord, there comes Beelzebub," groaned Gripper.

"Land sakes alive! what's that?" exclaimed Mrs. Gripper, with chattering teeth.

"Ter duyfels! dare vas ein odder ghost," moaned Hans.

Bang! bang! bang! on the door, and now the most profound silence reigned in the bedroom.

Bang! bang! bang! and then a loud "hallo, there!"

But no one moved.

After a moment Gripper began his groans and mutterings again, and Hans, feeling Mrs. Gripper's hand stealing upward toward his throat, became frightened, and once more began to kick and tumble about. The woman screamed, and in the midst of all this uproar, a bright light burst upon the scene, and a strong, manly voice demanded, in a tone of wonder and amazement:

"What the deuce is to pay here, I'd like to know?"

Then, as he caught sight of the farmer in bed, the old woman on the floor, with tattered dress and skirts, and the chair attachment, and poor Hans, with his head and arms enveloped in dresses, skirts, and other female wearing apparel, he burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WAR CORRESPONDENT SETS THINGS TO RIGHTS.

"Well, well," exclaimed the stranger, as soon as he was able to speak, "this beats any thing I ever saw before in all my eventful life, and I've seen a good deal too. I wonder what in the world I shall come across next."

All this time the farmer had been sitting up in bed, regarding the intruder attentively.

"You ain't the devil?" he asked at last.

"No, I should hope not," was the laughing reply; "still I should think someone had been raising the devil here."

"Nor yet Beelzebub?" persisted the farmer.

"No, nor him either," laughed Byington.

"And yet I have seen you before."

"Right again, old man."

"Ah! I know now, you're the news paper fellow that came to my house the first night of the great battle, and who got me into all this trouble by sending Tony Tibbits off to the army."

"I got you into trouble! What do you mean, old boy?"

"Ah, sir, it was through you, in the first place, that I lost my life,—But say, how come it that you too are in the bottomless pit? Was you so awful mean and wicked while on earth?"

"Now, old man, you've got me, until this minute I didn't know that I was in the bottomless pit,—indeed, I supposed I was in your own farmhouse, near Gettysburg. But to tell the exact truth, when I came up to your door, I was inclined to think that pandemonium had broke loose."

"See here, mister," whimpered Mrs. Gripper, at this point, "if you've got any of ther milk o' human kindness left inter your soul, I wish yer'd jist come here an' pull this cheer off on me.

Almost dying with suppressed laughter, Byington obeyed. He caught hold of the chair, and after two or three vigorous yanks pulled it off. He then helped the dilapidated woman to her feet.

With a bitter groan she sank into another chair; but this time she was careful to see that it had a firm wood bottom before she trusted her weight upon it.

Hans was next extricated from his unpleasant predicament, and as he slowly raised himself to his feet, he merely ejaculated—from force of habit, probably:

"Ter duyfels!" and then stared, first at the war correspondent, then at Mrs. Gripper, and lastly at her befogged husband on the bed.

"Now, if it's all the same to you," said Byington, "I'd like to have some one tell me the meaning of all I've seen here. What's the matter with Mr. Gripper? and what were you two doing on the floor there?"

He had addressed himself to the farmer's wife, and she hastened to answer:

"We'd been out-doors," she said, —"Hans an' me. General Lee called us out, an' wanted Hans ter hide him in ther barn an'——"

"WHAT!" exclaimed the astonished Byington, "General Lee wanted to hide in your barn! What in the world are you talking about, woman?"

"Talkin' about what really happened," she affirmed, "General Lee *did* want to hide in our barn, didn't he, Hans?"

"Yaw, dot vos such."

"Yes, indeed, an' he would a-done it too, if six Yankee soldiers hadn't a come up an' took him prisoner, wouldn't he, Hans?"

"Yaw."

"A squad of Union troops captured him, eh?"

"Yes. they did."

"Right here in your front yard?"

"Yes."

"How did they happen along so opportunely?"

"They knew he was somewhere hereabouts,' and were out in search of him."

"This *is* news," muttered Byington to himself, "Lee a prisoner in the hands of the Federals! I wonder if any of the other boys have got hold of it yet. If they hain't, by Jove, I shall be pretty well up in the world. Lord! how the *Tribunes* will go off to-morrow," and he began to write rapidly, holding his pad in his left hand, and shoving the pencil over the paper with his right.

"But come," he said at last, "you haven't told me the whole story yet, go on."

"Why, sir, you see, after the soldiers had carried off General Lee——"

"Stop! How long ago was that?"

"Let me see. How long ago was it, Hans? An hour?"

"Not so much as dot."

"Half an hour?"

"More."

"All right," said Byington, "say three-quarters, and go on."

"Well, after they'd carried him off, we came inside, an' Hans feelin' hungry, I got him something to eat.

"Just as he finished, and as I was thinkin' of puttin' ther things away, we both heard an awful groan, comin', as it seemed ter us, from this here very room, an' as yer may well suppose, we war both awfully disturbed."

"Why, didn't you know it was Mr. Gripper?"

"Ah! there it is, yer see, sir, we supposed ther old man was dead."

"Dead! why should you suppose so?"

"Why, you know how you sent Tony Tibbits away that night? Well, he never came back at all, an' ther moment ther battle was over—that is, yesterday mornin', Giles started out ter find him, an' we hadn't seen nothin' of the old man since, so we supposed he must have got killed by mistake."

"An' I was killed," spoke up the farmer abruptly; "but not by mistake—no, not be a long shot."

"How was that, sir?" asked the correspondent curiously.

"Why, yer see, I searched all day long yesterday—I suppose it was—for that pesky boy, an' not findin' him, one o' ther generals gave me quarters last night, sayin' as how he'd got track on him himself, an' that he'd send me to him terday. Well, he did, an' a young soldier went with me; au' when we got to ther regiment an' company where ter boy was, ther soldier left me, and them fellers said as how I was a spy, an' so they dug a grave an' buried me alive, that's how it comes that I'm dead now."

"Ah! I see," said Byington thoughtfully. Then turning to the woman:

"Well, go on, madam."

"Where was I? O, I remember. Hearin' that awful groan, we rushed in here; but it bein' dark, we couldn't see nuthiu', so I went out for a light, an' jist as I came back with it, we heer'd ther awfulest noise yer ever listed to an' I was so skeert that I dropped ther lamp—there 'tis now. Then Hans tumbled over a cheer, an' fell inter ter closet, an' I sot down in er nuther an' went clean through it. An' when I heer'd Giles tell as how he was in ther bad place an' had come ter haunt me, I tumbled over, as you found me."

"Ah! I see it all now," said Byington, with a smile. "And so, old man, you really think your dead, do you?"

"Of course; how can a man that's been buried be alive?"

"Such things have happened before, and will happen again," said the correspondent.

"Is that so?"

"Yes; and in your own case, I think I can tell you about how it was. You were speedily dug up after you were buried, and when you revived a little, being still somewhat dazed, came home mechanically, and without knowing what you were about. Your wife and Hans being outside, you found the front door open, and so walked in and came right here, naturally enough, and went to bed. After a while you got back your faculties a little more—enough so that you could recall the past, in a measure, and now, I fancy, you're all right. Come, old man, say that you are, for I want to do a stroke of business with you, and in a hurry too."

"What! and ain't I really dead?" asked the old man excitedly.

"No more than I am."

"And you ain't dead?"

"Not much."

"Hurrah! I'm ready for anything then. Want er do a stroke o' business with me, eh? Well, wait er minute, an' I'll be with you," and he sprang out of bed as buoyantly as a boy of ten.

"Mercy me!" exclaimed his wife, and rushed from the room.

Byington and Hans followed her, and a little later the farmer joined them in the dining-room.

"I ain't dead, that's a fact," said the old man, looking around him; "but I don't understand it yet."

"Well, it will all come back to you by-and-bye," said the correspondent. "And now let's talk. You've got a good horse in your stable, eh?"

"Why—yes—purty good."

"You bought him of a Union officer?"

"Ye—yes."

"Well, mine's a little lame. Come and look at him. The army is just moving South and I must be well mounted. If you're a mind to make a trade, I'll give you a hundred dollars to boot. Come, now, let's make quick work of it, for I must get off my dispatch about the capture of Lee, and then join Meade or Slocum, wherever they may happen to be."

"All right, mister, I'll look at your horse," and being now thoroughly convinced that he was still in the land of the living, the farmer became more worldly-minded than ever.

He sold the correspondent a horse he had never owned, stabled the one he took in exchange, and put one hundred and ten dollars in greenbacks in his pocket, and then he returned to his house feeling that he had done a very smart thing. So there, for the present, we will leave him.

CHAPTER XIII.

FROM GETTYSBURG TO THE TENNESSEE.

Unfortunately for the the Union cause, General Meade did not seem to comprehend the great advantage he had won. Two days after the battle he carefully pushed the Sixth corps toward the enemy; taking his other corps by different roads and advancing as rapidly as Lee moved on and got out of the way.

The general course was toward Frederick, which was reach the second day out.

The Seventeenth pressed forward with the Eleventh corps to Hagerstown, which it occupied on the twelfth of July, capturing one hundred and twenty-five prisoners. The Fifth and Twentieth overtook the enemy intrenched at Fair Play on the twelfth and were ordered to take position and throw up earthworks.

Next night the main rebel army escaped across the Potomac. The retreat and pursuit were continued, without much in the way of interest, until Lee's army occupied the south side of the Rapidan, near Orange Court House.

The Twelfth corps went into camp near Raccoon Ford. Ross, the colonel of the Twentieth, now had command of the brigade.

On the twenty-fourth of September the Twelfth corps was relieved and marched back to Brandy Station; and all property was turned over to the post quartermaster.

The march was resumed to Bealton Station, where to the surprise of all, the corps was embarked on board the cars to reenforce the Army of the Cumberland in Tennessee.

This was to meet Longstreet's army, already thrown into the western scale in aid of Bragg.

Rosecrans had been pushed into the fortifications around Chattanooga; and Bragg was investing the place, while operating on the Union communications with strong detachments. The enemy occupied Look-

out Mountain, and the railroad and river back to Bridgeport, Alabama. The Union army was on half-rations. Every day their provision-trains were attacked and wagons captured.

The twelfth corps travelled night and day from Virginia westward. The twentieth regiment, in which we are particularly interested, was stowed away in freight-cars. Dispatch was indispensable. Comfort could not be considered.

The commissary had preceded; and at regular intervals the train stopped for sandwiches and coffee for the soldiers.

All through Ohio and Indiana the troops were greeted with an ovation. Thousands turned out at every stoppingplace; and ladies brought to the veterans bouquets and wreaths of flowers. Haversacks were seized, and filled with fruit, cake, baked meat-pies; and the pork and hardtack came to be despised.

From Louisville they went on to Nashville, thence to Murfreesborough and to Fullahoma.

The rebel guerrillas infested the whole country; and they now cut the railway immediately in the rear of the reenforcements.

A division of the Twelfth corps was ordered to defend the track from Bridgeport back toward Nashville; and the guerrillas became, for a time, somewhat more timid, and their raids less frequent.

The Twentieth regiment went through Tennessee to Stephenson, Alabama, where they arrived on the fourth of October. Here the Twelfth corps had its headquarters, and was occupied in guarding the lines of communication for the army at Chattanooga. A few weeks later the Twentieth Regiment went to Cowan, Tennessee.

Grant was now in command, and had an army of one hundred thousand veterans in and around Chattanooga. During the succeeding weeks, he moved on Lookout Mountain and Mission Ridge; defeated the rebel army with frightful slaughter; captured six thousand prisoners, seven thousand stand of arms, and scores of cannon, and pursued the shattered hosts of Bragg as far as Dalton.

The Twentieth regiment was still guarding the lines of communication at Cowan. The duties of the regiment were extremely arduous; and they suffered every few days from guerrilla raids. One company, stationed at Tracy City, was surprised by a band of more than one hundred and fifty land pirates, who dashed into their lines, and attempted to capture or murder the boys.

One brave fellow, a guard, was shot dead from the first fire. Captain Upson, commander of the post, was murdered in cold blood. While he was trying to join his company, only a few rods distant, he was shot twice through his body after his surrender, and he soon after died from the effects of his wounds.

A part of this same band of guerrillas attacked a freight-train of eleven cars, at some distance from Cowan. A rail had cautiously been displaced from the track, which threw off the train with a terrible crash.

Instantly a gang of rebels jumped from behind trees and ledges, and commenced the work of bloodshed and plunder upon the passengers; simultaneously firing the train, which was loaded with hay, lumber, and the like.

Captain Ellsworth, who at the time acting as brigade-inspector, and who sometimes was unlucky and then again lucky, happened unfortunately to be on board.

Three brave soldiers were shot down by his side; and a musket was leveled and fired at him, which missed its mark, just grazing his neck.

Ellsworth, in company with two lieutenants and three negroes, brakemen on the train, was then taken under guard, and run off three miles or more into a dense woods. The poor negroes were shot; Ellsworth expected the same fate; but was finally simply robbed of his watch, about four hundred dollars in money, his coat, hat, boots; and then asked to sign a parole.

He flatly refused; and, after stripping the two lieutenants, who were with him, of all they had, they were then left by the cutthroats to grope their way back through the woods barefooted, which they did, guided by the light of the burning cars.

Captain Ellsworth was not in the best of humor when he got back to his regiment, and he lost no time in laying the matter before the lieutenant-colonel commanding.

The officers were called together, as a sort of committee of war, and it was unanimously determined, that the land pirates must be exterminated.

But how should they go at it? only a small portion of the regiment could be spared to follow them up, the rest were absolutely needed for guard duty along the road.

While they were still deliberating, Major Andley Peale, of the Tennessee Union cavalry, was announced.

He listened attentively to what was being said, and at last asked permission to say a word himself.

Permission was promptly granted.

"I understand," said the Major, "that quite a number of Kentucky horses were captured by your men the other day. How many of them were there?"

"Between fifty and sixty," said the Lieutenant-Colonel.

"Ah! then let me have between fifty and sixty of your best men, who can keep the saddle when on horseback, and I'll soon settle this business for you."

"By Jove!" laughed the Lieutenant-Colonel, "I don't know as we've got that number of horsemen in the whole regiment. Connecticut is hardly big enough, you know, to practice horsemanship in to advantage"

"I'll guarantee to furnish the men," exclaimed Captain Ellsworth, quickly, "if I may be allowed to accompany them."

"It's a bargain," said the lieutenant-colonel, promptly; "and now you and Major Peale go off and settle all the details of the expedition between you."

"You turn the capable horses over to us, of course," said Peale.

"Certainly."

"Come, then, Captain." And the two went out together.

Less than an hour later Randal Ellsworth, at the head of nearly his whole command, rode out of Cowan, in company with Audley Peale, and his Union cavalry, and that night they bivouacked on the banks of a swiftly flowing stream, near the outskirts of a pretty village, and many miles from headquarters.

CHAPTER XIV.

EDNA STANWOOD DEFENDS HER HOME.

About two miles from the bivouac, and south of the village, standing on a slight eminence, which overlooked the broad acres of one of the best plantations in East Tennessee, stood a stately mansion, which for more than sixty years had been the abode of one of the proudest families in all the land.

An unnatural silence reigned about the place, no one could be seen in the grounds, no lights appeared in the windows, and even the negro quarters seemed deserted.

All at once, a steady, growing sound was head in the distance, which soon resolved itself into the measured hoof-strokes of a number of well-trained horses; and soon a squad of mounted men appeared, who, on coming in sight of the mansion, halted, and held a brief consultation.

"Now, then, Bolton," said the leader of the party, "you're quite sure of what you say; the general left those papers with his wife, did he?"

"Yes, Colonel, either with his wife or Miss Edna, I won't be certain which; but I'd think it more likely the latter, for she's got more grit and determination about her than her mother. If she wasn't a woman, she'd be her father right over again."

"O, bother her and her father too," growled one of the number, "what we want to know about is the papers; eh, Colonel?"

"To be sure," acquiesced the colonel; "still, I must say Bolton is

right about the girl. Edna Stanwood is a young lady of very decided character, and she comes of mighty good stock, too."

"She's a regular she devil," growled the man who had before spoken.

"Come, come, Captain, not quite so bad as that. I fear you have a particular grudge against her and her family."

"So I have; and against every other Union family in East Tennessee."

"Humph! is that all? Then you haven't so much cause for grievance as I have myself."

"Ah! I remember," said the captain before he thought, "she rejected you too."

"Oho! then she *did* reject you, my dear captain? In truth, I always thought so."

Captain Jillson bit his lip with vexation, but presently blurted out:

"Yes, Colonel Hicks, she did reject me; and at the time I swore the day should come when she should repent it—when I'd be even with her and all her race. You may judge, then, with what delight I heard, after the South had taken up arms, that St. Clair Stanwood had boldly announced himself as an uncompromising Union man, and had accepted a commission in the Union army. Then it was that I resolved to take an active part in the war on the side of the South; and in order not to be drawn too far away from my main object, I joined your independent force, Colonel."

"I see. Well, I've no great cause to love the Stanwoods myself, and with such a good hater as you by my side, Abner, we ought to be able to accomplish something to-night."

"If we get hold of those papers we shall accomplish something."

"Ah! but suppose the girl refuses to give them up, or to tell where they are?"

"Then force her," hissed Jillson, between his set teeth.

"But suppose she still refuses, in spite of all I can do?"

"Then turn her over to me, and threaten to burn down the house."

"That would be pretty tough, wouldn't it? I hear Mrs. Stanwood is quite an invalid, and Flora Penrose, her niece, as kind and inoffensive a girl as ever lived, is staying there with her."

"That can't be helped, we must have those papers, at whatever cost. You know as well as I, Colonel, the possession of them would set us up for life."

"That's so," muttered the Colonel, thoughtfully—"Well, come on, we must try for them, any way. Bolton, is there many niggers about the place?"

"Very few, colonel, not more than twenty-five or thirty in all, and most of 'em mind there own business too."

"All right, that's the safest plan for them. Come on, let's make straight for the front door, and so get inside before they have time to fasten it. Forward!"

The little party moved on, rode through the open gateway, and pushed forward to the broad veranda which ran across the whole front of the mansion.

"Dismount!" was the Colonel's brief order, and springing from his own horse, he made a rush toward the open door.

"Back! not another step forward or I fire!" and a fair young girl, of not more than nineteen summers, suddenly appeared in the doorway, a revolver ready in her hand.

Taken completely by surprise, the colonel at first retreated down the steps; but quickly recovering himself, and supported by his dozen followers, he again advanced toward the door.

"Back, I say!" came in firm determined tones from the lady's lips, "not one of you can enter here, I know you all for a band of heartless outlaws, and while I live you shall never cross the threshold of my father's house."

"Out of the way, Edna Stanwood!" said Abner Jillson, in a brutal voice, "We have not come hear this night to be balked in our purpose by a woman, out of the way, I say, or it may be the worse for you."

"No sir! I move not from where I stand until you have left this place," was the brave reply.

"One moment," said Colonel Hicks, in a somewhat conciliatory tone, "it may be that this matter can be compromised. We have come for a certain package of papers, which, as we happen to know, your father left, some days since, either in your own, or your mother's hands, for safe keeping."

"You happen to know!" sneered Edna, "I see Austin Bolton among you, and understand very well how you 'happen to know' that my dear and brave father, when he visited us the other day, left certain papers behind him."

"Ah! he did leave them then;" exclaimed Hicks quickly. "Well, deliver up those papers to us, and we will go away at once, and make you no further trouble."

"Those papers are no longer in this house," said Edna firmly.

"What! no longer here? I don't believe you."

"Of course she lies," growled Jillson, casting a look of deep and bitter hatred on the girl.

"It makes not the slightest difference to me what you say or think," she said calmly, "the papers are not here. Do you for a moment suppose, after learning that Austin Bolton had been seen sneaking about our drawing room, while my father was talking to my mother and myself in the library adjoining, that I would keep the papers in the house another hour?"

Lester Hicks, I knew his connection with you, and that bad man by your side, and therefore understood only too well how dangerous it would be."

"Hum," said the colonel, after a moments' consideration, "then you will give us no information about the package?"

"I will not," was the decided reply.

"Then you must stand out of the way, for I propose to question your mother."

"You will do nothing of the kind, sir, my mother is confined to her room, where my cousin is attending her, and she cannot be disturbed, it would be dangerous to her health, which, I frankly tell you, is very precarious."

"Oh, come, hain't we heard about enough of this chin music?" asked Jillson impatiently, "What are we standing here for, any way? Shall we let one weak girl keep a dozen of us strong men in awe?"

"I wouldn't advise one of the dozen strong men to attempt to interfere with the weak girl," said Edna quietly.

At this moment one of the men whispered to Jillson, and as Edna saw, directed his attention to one of the windows opening on the veranda, and which was partially raised.

"Yes," exclaimed the captain eagerly, "do it, then we shall have her sure; for she can't defend herself both in front and rear at the same time."

The girls' sharp ear caught every word of this, and fully comprehending its meaning, her resolution was at once taken.

The man who had whispered to Jillson watched her closely for a moment, and when he thought her attention was directed another way, sprang suddenly forward, and made a leap at the partially open window.

He caught the upraised sash in his left hand, and his knee rested on the window-sill, He was about to lift the other leg over the still, when—

Crack!

A bullet pierced his temple, and without uttering the slightest sound, he fell backward upon the floor of the veranda—dead.

CHAPTER XV.

THE GUERILLAS DISCOMFITED.

FOR one single moment the other partisans were too thoroughly confounded to speak or act, then a cry of rage went up, and each called upon the other to shoot down the gal in her tracks.

"I gave you all fair warning," she said coolly. "He knew the risk he ran, and has only paid the just penalty. He knew he had no right to invade this house, and I know, and you know that I have a perfect right to defend it, and what's more, *I will* too. So beware—every one of you—how you provoke me to pull the trigger again,—

"Hold, there! You, sir, you need not try to sneak away. I understand your purpose, you would attempt to get around to the back of the house; but it won't do, the first man

who undertakes to leave the grounds in front here, dies,—ay, and the first who attempts to draw a weapon too!"

While Edna was speaking she kept her eyes fixed on the group directly in front of her, and particularly on one man who appeared to be edging off toward the corner of the house, and another, whose hand was nervously groping for the handle of his revolver.

Her attention being thus engaged, she did not see that Abner Jillson had gained a footing on the veranda, and was slowly and cautiously approaching her from one side.

All at once he sprang toward her, and striking her wrist a sudden blow, the revolver dropped from her hand, then, with a mocking laugh, he tried to seize her about the waist and drag her from the doorway.

She uttered a slight scream, and quickly freeing herself, started back a step or two, then, as Jillson attempted to follow and seize her again, she plucked a dagger from her bosom, and aimed a blow at his breast.

He quickly raised his arm to defend himself, and the keen blade was buried in his flesh.

He uttered a sharp cry of rage, and fell back a step or two toward the edge of the veranda. One of the men, a friend, both of the captain and of him who had been killed, now drew a bowie, and with a horrible oath, sprang toward the beautiful girl.

The gleaming knife was upraised, in another moment it would descend and be buried in her fair bosom.

Crack!

It fell; but it was not sheathed in the maiden's heart. It went ringing to the veranda floor, and he who had dropped it, himself fell prone at the brave girl's feet.

Had a shell suddenly burst among them, it could not have created greater consternation.

All, with one accord, turned in the direction from whence the unexpected shot had come, and there, close to the last pillow of the veranda, they beheld a noble-looking Federal officer, of perhaps twenty-six or seven years, holding in each hand a heavy revolver, and they at once understood that he also held their lives in his hands.

For almost a minute not a word was uttered by anyone, then, slowly the Federal approached the group, his eyes never leaving it for an instant, his revolvers always presented.

"Well, I must say," he began, as he drew nearer, "this is the queerest sort of a fight I ever had the fortune to witness—a dozen strong men against one weak woman! I've heard a great deal about Southern chivalry in my time —a great deal too much; but I never saw such a practical illustration of it as I witness at this moment. But say, ain't it about time this farce was played out? Let's see how many there are of you—ten, and the wounded captain there is eleven, then there were thirteen in all; but dead men don't count. Now then, let's see what we shall do with you, and in the first place, gentlemen, I will thank you for any little present in the way of barkers and toothpicks. You may just throw them down here on the veranda at my feet. No doubt you will accept this invitation with alacrity and enthusiasm."

"But suppose we won't accept it at all, what then?" growled Jillson.

The young officer did not answer in words, he simply tapped the revolver in his right hand with his forefinger. But the action was so peculiarly suggestive that words were not needed to complete his meaning. And with another growl the nearest man threw down his weapons.

"Hallo!" exclaimed the next man, as he cast a bowie on the veranda. "I've seen this fellow before. By the Lord Harry! he's the same Yank we captured on the train last night —he is, for a thousand!"

"Thunder! so he is," muttered half a dozen.

"Exactly," smiled Randal Ellsworth, "and now, as you see, the table is turned, and as I have some four hundred dollars in greenbacks to collect from you, besides a first-rate pair of boots and many other articles of wearing apparel, to say nothing of much valuable personal property, I shall stay with you till the debt is canceled. You may make your minds perfectly easy on that score."

"What thundering fools we were not to treat you as we did the niggers last night," said Jillson regretfully.

"I don't know as to that," said Randal, in a careless tone; "but if you don't hurry up with your offerings I know how some of you will get treated, and in mighty short order too."

By this time about half the men had thrown down their arms, and others were advancing, when Jillson hurriedly said something to Hicks, who nodded hastily, and drawing his revolver and addressing Ellsworth, said:

"You want my arms, do you, captain? Well, you can't have 'em; but you can take the contents of this," and he pulled the trigger.

If Randal Ellsworth had not been expecting something of the kind, or if the game had been tried in the first place, when all were armed, it might have proved fatal. But as it was, the Yankee captain was prepared for treachery, and as half the men had already thrown down their arms, he had only the other half to look after, and this he was able to do.

He saw Jillson whisper to the colonel. He saw the colonel's assenting nod, and readily understood its meaning. So the instant before the rebel chief pressed the trigger, he slightly changed his position, and at the same time, fired.

The colonel's bullet buried itself in the clapboarding behind the Yankee captain, while the latter's ball struck the colonel's right hand, carrying away a finger, and causing him to drop his revolver. At the same time, Jillson cried out:

"Now's our time, boys! Down with the cursed Yankee! Kill him in his tracks!"

Those who had not surrendered their weapons prepared to use them while those who had, sprang forward to recover them.

"Back, fools!" hissed Ellsworth, "you come only to your death," and he gave a peculiar whistle.

Before the echo had died away, two pistol shots rang out.

Crack! crack!

And two of the foremost of the guerillas fell, and the others, feeling sure that a large force was coming to the assistance of the Yankee officer, turned to fly.

And now, for the first time, they saw that their horses, which they had left only a short distance from the veranda, were gone.

"It's of no use, my rebel friends," said Ellsworth quietly, "the game is in our hands, and you may as well submit without making any fuss about it. It's either that, or the other thing—take your choice. It makes very little difference to me."

"What do you require of us?" demanded Hicks sullenly.

"Your unconditional surrender," was the firm reply.

"And what then?"

"That's nothing to do with the question now. You must surrender first, what shall be done with you afterwards, can be settled in the future."

"Well, we submit."

"Very wise, I'll call up a couple of my men to receive such weapons as may still be lingering about your clothes, I can't trust you to give them up yourselves—Tim!—Tony!" And immediately Tim Cooney and Tony Tibbits presented themselves.

"Disarm these men," said the captain. "I'll see to it that they make you no trouble."

"Throuble, is it!" exclaimed Tim, scornfully, "Oi'd jist loike ter see ther loikes uv thim a-makin' me throuble. Now howld still, will yez, till I go through yer pockets."

CHAPTER XVI.

AT SIGHT OF TONY MRS. STANWOOD IS AGITATED.

The eleven deeply chagrined guerrillas quietly submitted to the close inspection instituted by Tim and Tony, and when it was concluded quite a pile of deadly weapons lay up on the veranda, almost enough, in fact, to set up a young arsenal.

"Now, then," said the captain, "they must be securely bound. See to it, will you, Tim?"

"Oh, murther!" exclaimed Tim, "divil a bit av rope have oi to tie thim with, barrin' me bridle, an' that ain't rope at all."

"You want cords, I suppose, to secure your prisoners?" said Edna, now speaking for the first time since Randal Ellsworth's well directed shot had saved her life.

"Yes, miss, and good stout ones too," answered Randal, raising his cap.

"I will get them for you."

"Tony, go with her; you may be of some assistance."

The young lady had already turned, and so did not hear this order, therefore she was not aware that she was being accompanied.

As she was passing the broad staircase which led up to the second story, a feeble and anxious voice came floating down to her:

"Edna, Edna, my daughter, what is the matter? Has anything happened to you? Are you quite safe? Child! child! where are you? Flora, do go to her."

"Yes, aunty, if you wish it," responded the sweetest voice ever heard by mortal ear; "but you know she made me promise not to leave you for a single moment on any account, unless she called me herself."

"I know, I know; but I am sure something must have happened to her, or she would have come to reassure me. You heard those firearms yourself. I tell you I can't stand this terrible suspense."

On hearing this, Edna fairly flew up the staircase, and Tony, as in duty bound, followed her.

She threw open the door of her mother's room, and without pausing to shut it, rushed to the invalid's side, and throwing her arms about her neck, exclaimed:

"Here I am, darling mother, and safe and sound, as you see."

Her mother folded her in a fond and silent embrace, and then holding her away from her gazed long and tenderly into her face.

Presently, with a loving kiss, Edna started to her feet. As she did so, Mrs. Stanwood caught sight of the young drummer boy, who was now standing in the middle of the room.

"Good heavens!" she exclaimed, "that face! that face! Who is he, child?"

Wonderingly Edna turned, and caught sight of Tony.

"Why, boy, how came you here?" she asked in astonishment.

"Captain Ellsworth sent me," he replied. "He said I might be of some assistance to you."

"Ah, his name is Ellsworth, then," she murmured. "Well, I must not forget my errand. I will find the cord for you at once."

"But who is he? who is he?" persisted her mother, pointing to Tony.

"Tell her," said Edna, addressing the boy. Then turning to her mother: "But I don't see why he should so interest you?"

"The very image," she murmured, "the very image." Then aloud:

"Who are you, child?"

"My name is Tony Tibbits," he replied, "and I belong in Adams county, Pennsylvania."

"Tony Tibbits! a most singular name, I am sure."

"I should think so!" exclaimed Edna. "Now who could have the heart to christen a child Tony, I'd like to know."

"I don't think I was christened Tony," the boy ventured to say. "I've heard Mr. Stover —that's the town guardian—say that my right name was Anthony."

"Anthony!" mused Mrs. Stanwood, "Anthony!"

"Ah! that's somewhat better," said Edna; "still there are other names I should like quite as well."

"But—Tibbits," said the elder lady suddenly. "Who was your father, child?"

Tony blushed.

"I—I—really ma'am, I don't know."

"Don't know! How can that be?"

A sad look came into the boy's face as he answered:

"I have but a dim recollection of the first few years of my life, and if I ever saw him, I cannot recall my father's face. Of my mother I am sure I remember something—a beautiful lady, who dressed elegantly, and looked, it seems to me, like you, miss,"—indicating Edna—"and I am sure we lived in a pleasant home, surrounded by every comfort. Then comes a blank, and my next recollection is of the terrible life I was forced to lead at the town farm, near Gettysburg."

"The what, did you say?"

"Alas, ma'am, the poorhouse."

"Shocking!" exclaimed the lady. "But you did not stay there long, I hope?"

"Till I was quite a well-grown boy, then Mr. Gripper took me to work on his farm and help about the house, and I lived with him until the battle of Gettysburg was fought, when I joined Captain Ellsworth's company."

"And haven't you anything at all connected with your early life—a ring—a locket—any trinket that might serve to identify you, or show who your parents were?"

"I have a chain with a peculiar trinket hanging to it; but it's in Tim Cooney's knapsack, and that's at our bivouace, a couple of miles from here."

"Boy, you must bring that chain and trinket. All your future depends on your doing so. I may be able to tell you who your parents are. God grant I am not mistaken."

"Oh, ma'am, I will surely bring them to you if the captain will let me come."

"He must. Boy, do you hear me, he *must*."

While Mrs. Stanwood was talking to Tony, Edna had left the room. She now returned with a quantity of strong cord in her hand.

"Take this to your captain," she said, and then, as her cheeks became suffused with blushes,—"and tell him—and tell him—I would like to see him for a few moments before he goes away."

"Yes, Miss, I'll tell him," and bowing, cap in hand, to each of the three ladies, Tony backed out of the door.

"And don't forget to bring the chain and trinket, child," called Mrs. Stanwood after him, as he disappeared in the hallway.

"I'll not forget." And he hurried down the stairs.

The prisoners were speedily bound, and then, after a word of caution to Tim and Tony, Ellsworth entered the house.

He found Edna waiting for him in the parlor.

She arose as he approached, and frankly extending her hand, said:

"I have to thank you, sir, for the valuable assistance you rendered me. Captain, you saved my life."

"I require no thanks, Miss Stanwood," said Randal, earnestly. "I am proud indeed to know that I have been of the slightest service to you—to General Stanwood's daughter."

"You know my father, then?" she asked, quickly.

"I have some acquaintance with him; but I know him by reputation far better."

"He is a noble gentleman, if he is my father, and a true, disinterested patriot," said Edna, proudly.

"He is indeed," rejoined Ellsworth, "and is beloved by every Union soldier in Tennessee."

"I am so glad to hear you say so. And now let me ask, what will you do with your prisoners?"

"I cannot tell what will be done with them ultimately. I shall turn them over to the senior officer, Major Peale, who commands the expedition of which my company forms a part. What he will do with them I cannot say."

"But you have some idea?"

"Probably they will be sent North, as prisoners of war."

"Then I am satisfied. I should not care to think that I, in any way, was connected with the death of the most unworthy among them. I have already sent one man into eternity, and I do not wish to add to the number."

"Don't let the thought trouble you in the least, Miss Stanwood. It is not at all likely that the scoundrels out yonder will get anything like their just deserts."

"And yet," said she, "I have heard that Major Peale was not inclined to be very tender hearted when guerrillas fell into his hands. Then, abruptly: "Where did you say your camp was?"

"About two miles from here, on the banks of a beautiful stream."

"Oh! I think I know. I suppose you will not remain there long?"

"Only until morning."

"What, will you leave this neighborhood so soon?"

"Then, if you too think so, I ought to hasten to camp at once, and report."

"Before you leave, will you do me the favor to speak to my mother. She would like to thank you herself for the great service you have rendered us; and there is another thing; she would like to ask you a question or two about that really remarkable boy you have with you, Tony, I think he is called."

"Certainly, I will speak to your mother, and be glad to do so; but, as I have already told you, I don't care to be thanked; and as for Tony, I can tell her very little about him, excepting that he is the brightest boy I ever happened to run across."

"Well, come, and tell her that."

"I will, and if she cares to hear a prediction I will tell her that if the war only lasts a year or two longer, and he has the good luck to escape flying bullets, I have no hesitation in saying that Tony Timbits will leave the army a commissioned officer."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PRISONERS UNDER GUARD.

As Edna and Captain Ellsworth entered Mrs. Stanwood's room, the invalid looked up quickly.

"The boy—where is the boy?" she asked impatiently.

"He is out in front, waiting for his commanding officer," said Edna. Then indicating Ellsworth, "this, mother, is Captain Ellsworth, the brave man who saved my life just now, when, had it not been for him, I should have died at the hands of Lester Hick's guerrillas."

"Captain," said Mrs. Stanwood, extending her hand, and speaking with great feeling, "how can I ever thank you? You have laid us under a life long obligation. It would have killed the general, as well as myself, had anything happened to our child—our only child." Then suddenly: "Is that boy—Anthony, he said his name was, in your company, captain?"

"Yes, ma'am, he is," responded Randal, "and a great favorite with us all."

"What do you know of him—his early life, I mean?" asked the lady.

"Very little, I fear, that will interest you, ma'am."

"Please permit me to be the judge, captain. Tell me what you do know."

Then Ellsworth told how Tony had first made his appearance on the battle field of Gettysburg, and how it had happened that he became a member of his company. He also mentioned his former relations with Gripper the farmer.

"And is that all you know about him?" asked Mrs. Stanwood, in a disappointed tone, when he had finished.

"I regret to say it is," was the answer.

"He has a fine gold chain with a little trinket attached. He says it is in the kit of one of his comrades. Will you permit him to bring it to me in the morning?"

"If such a thing is possible, he shall do so. If not to-morrow, at all events, I will see that the chain and trinket reach you within a day or so at the latest."

"Let him bring it himself, if possible, please."

"If possible—yes."

"Thank you, captain, you are very kind." And the invalid lady spoke in a weary tone. Ellsworth took the hint and arose to depart.

At that moment Flora Penrose, who had been out of the room when he was introduced, entered it from an inner apartment. As his eyes rested upon her sweet face, Randal Ellsworth was absolutely startled by her wondrous beauty.

He was quietly introduced, and soon found himself comparing the charms of the two cousins.

Edna was grand, queenly, self-reliant, and her beauty was of a dazzling quality. Flora was more subdued, home like, and her beauty, while perfect, was of a less striking character.

Had he seen Flora first he might have loved her at once; but as it was, when he looked upon Edna's perfect features, flashing eyes, and commanding figure, he concluded that, after all, there could be nothing half so glorious in all the world as this grand and majestic woman, and mentally, he resolved to tell her so some day.

Having bid the ladies good night, he hurried down the broad staircase and out upon the veranda, and in response to Tim and Tony to prepare for their return to camp.

"An' phat about thim thirteen horses we captured, Captain, darlint?" asked Tim.

"Why," began the captain, "as we are in a great hurry—but, stop! an idea has occurred to me," and hastily he again entered the house.

Edna stood by the window, in a thoughtful attitude. She raised her eyes as he entered the room, and a faint blush suffused her cheeks.

"I find myself in a somewhat embarrassing situation," said Randal, rapidly, "and have come back to ask a question, and beg a favor at your hands."

"Any question you may see fit to ask, I shall cheerfully answer," she rejoined, "and the favor, whatever it may be, is already granted."

"Many thanks. I wish, then, to ask if you have not at least one or two faithful negroes on your place, and if so, where they are, and why we have not seen them."

"We have a few—a very few negroes left," said Edna, slowly, "most of them have been killed by the lawless guerrillas. Still, there are two men who I am sure would lay down their lives for any member of my father's family."

"And where are those two?" asked Randal.

For a moment Edna hesitated; then, after a glance through the window, and into the hallway, she said:

"I sent them on a secret mission early this evening."

"Ah!" exclaimed Ellsworth, "and when will they return?"

"I expect them at any moment."

"Good! Now, then, for my request. You see, Miss Stanwood, I started out to-night on a sort of a quixotic expedition, and took only one man and that boy, Tony, with me. We have taken eleven prisoners, together with thirteen horses and a large number of weapons. I would be somewhat difficult, I apprehend, for me three to take our prisoners and booty to camp in safety, especially as we feel pretty sure that the full band to which the outlaws belong is at no great distance. I will, then, with your kind permission, leave the prisoners here, with one of my men and your two faithful negroes to guard them, and at once return to camp myself with the boy. It will not take long to reach our bivouac, and I shall speedily return with Major Peale and our full force to relieve you of your unpleasant visitors."

"A very good plan indeed, Captain, and the only proper one for you to follow, I should say," exclaimed Edna, heartily.

"You really think so?"

"I do indeed. And you have only to wait for the return of Ellick and Wash to carry it out."

"Then I'll go and speak to Tim. You can

let me know when the two negroes you mention have returned."

The captain rejoined Tim and Tony, and having drawn them to one side, hastily explained his plans.

Tim, with the freedom of his race, hastily approved, and assured Ellsworth that he could safely leave the dhirty guerrillas in his hands, and that he would see to it that ther black naygars didn't go ter slape on their posts or duty.

While they were yet talking, Edna came out on the veranda, followed by two blacks, one of them a perfect Hercules in stature, build and strength. This was Ellick.

It took but a moment to ioform them of the situation, and having seen the prisoners placed in an out-building, and the guard duly mounted, Captain Ellsworth sprang to saddle, and closely followed by Tony, started at a gallop for the Union camp.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A FEARFUL SLAUGHTER.—THE GUERRILLA CHIEF AND CAPTAIN ESCAPE.

In less than ten minutes the captain and Tony reached the bivouac, and while the former was yet asking where he could find Major Peale, that officer came up and eagerly requested to be informed where in the world he had been for the last hour or so, and what adventures he had met with.

Randel explained.

Before he had finished the major ordered the boot and saddle call to be sounded, and hastily prepared to mount his own horse.

"You can finish your story on the road, captain," he said. And when they were galloping toward the Stanwood mansion, he abruptly renewed the conversation with the remark:

"And so you were fortunate enough to make the acqualntance of Miss Edna Stanwood, eh?"

"Yes," said Ellsworth, "I had that honor. She is a beautiful woman."

"Magnificent. Did you see her mother?"

"Yes; she too must have been beautiful in her day—indeed, she is so still; but she is a sad invalid."

"Ah—yes, a *sad* invalid, as you say. There is a dark chapter in the history of the Stanwood family, and while it has to a great extent affected the general, it has almost completely broken up his wife. Did you meet anybody else at the mansion?"

"Only one other person, the sweetest—the most lovable girl I ever met, unless ——"

"Ah! who was that?" asked Peale hastily.

"Miss Penrose."

"You saw her then? And—and (uneasily) you think her lovely?"

"I do, indeed," was the emphatic reply. "And to be frank with you, major, I should have fallen in love with her, had I not seen Edna Stanwood first."

"Ah! and so you have fallen in love with Edna?" exclaimed the major, in a tone of great relief."

"I suppose I'm a fool to confess it," said Randal; "for it ain't at all likely that such a glourious being would ever give a second thought to a poor devil of a captain like me."

"Why not?" said Peale, "you saved her life, and I know Edna Stanwood, she is warm-hearted and grateful, believe me."

"She has a regal look, and I should hardly think——"

"I know what you would say, my friend; but for all her stately appearance, she has a wealth of affection to bestow upon the right man—the man who shall win her heart, I am sure of it."

At this moment a figure glided from the side of the road and approached the rapidly moving column.

As it came near, by the pale light of the moon, it could be seen that it was a man, somewhat beyond middle life, and indeed his iron-gray looks indicated that old age was rapidly advancing. Still, his active body and strength of limbs seemed an assurrance that many years of usefulness were yet before him.

"Stop one moment, Major," he exclaimed abruptly, as he raised his hand, "you're lookin' fur Hicks's gang, their varmints is in ther valley, tother side o' Stanwood creek."

Major Peale and Randal both brought their horses to a stand as the old man spoke, and Peale, in a tone of great satisfaction, exclaimed,

"Farley, by all that's glorious!"

"Yes, Major, its me" nodded the union scout. "Nor don't lose any time, an' you can come down on ter'em like a clap o' thunder, then Cunnel and Capin Jillson ain't with 'em."

"We know that; but can't you guide us to the spot, Farley?"

"Its unpossible, Major, I've got-ter be thirty miles from this afore mornin.' You can't miss it,—in the valley, just over the creek, good night," and the renowned scout of the Tennessee was gone.

"That's luck for us, any way," exclaimed Peale, exultingly, as they once more started on.

"Yes," said Ellsworth, "I fancy we shall thin out that gang of cutthroats before morning now, for a fact."

A minute later they reached the Stanwood place, and having left a sufficient guard to watch the prisoners, and permitted Tim and Tony to join them, they started for the valley beyond Stanwood creek.

Audley Peale knew exactly how to conduct such an enterprise as the one on which they were now engaged, and his force entered the valley from two directions, rendering it utterly impossible for the guerillas to escape.

At length they came upon the camp, and before their presence was even suspected, the signal for the attack was given, and a fearful fight ensued. No, it was not a fight, it was a slaughter—a terrible, a bloody slaughetr, in which the Union men had it all their own way, and they smote the guerilla and spared not.

Ellsworth and his men would have willingly given quarter: but when the carnage was at its height, Peale's Tennessean's could not be restrained, they only remembered all the wrongs they had suffered at the hands of the rebels—wrongs in their own persons, and in the persons of thetr wives, sisters, mothers and daughters, and so, when the fight was over, not a guerilla was left alive on that bloody field!

It was fearful, appalling; but many fearful and appalling things occurred during the great war of the Rebellion.

The Union force suffered very little, only one or two men were killed, and less than a dozen wounded. More than a hundred horses were captured, and a large quantity of arms and ammunition was secured.

Just before daylight the victors left the valley, and again started for the Stanwood plantation.

As they reached the open gateway, it was evident to them all that something of importance had happened during their absence. Two or three Union men could be seen hurrying around to the rear of the house, and Ellsworth counted six dead bodies in front, where only two had been a few hours before.

Then they saw Ellick and Wash approaching, the former with his head bound up in a red and yellow bandana handkerchief, and the latter with his left arm in a sling.

"What the deuce has been to pay here?" demanded Major Peale, sharply, as they drew near.

"Dar's trouble enough, Mars'r Major," answered Ellick, with gleaming eyes. "Dem guerrillas got hold ob de arms in some way, an' we've had er purty hot fight, I tole yer. Cunnel Hicks, him an' Cap'n Jillson, dey's done gone an' got clean away. De odder prisoners, dey didn't get off, dey—"

"Well, what of them?" asked Peale, impatiently.

"Dey's done gone dead—ebery one on 'em."

"And our men—are any of them dead?"

"No, sah; but dey's purty much all on 'em hurt, an' some mighty bad."

"This is serious," said Ellsworth, regretfully. "For my part, I'd rather all the rest had escaped than those two."

"It is bad," rejoined the major, "and from what you have told me, I fear it would 't do to leave this place unguarded while they are at liberty. They are capable of returning here and murdering the whole family."

"That's what I was thinking. What do you propose to do?"

"Make this place our headquarters until they are captured and hung."

"Ah! and you believe they can be found?"

"Look at that negro there—the big one, I mean."

"Well?"

"I'll stake my life it was either Hicks or Jillsen who cracked his skull for him. He's bent on revenge. I can see it; and nobody knows all the hiding places in this part of the country as well as he. With his help we can track the scoundrels to their death. Ellick, come here. Whose work was that?" pointing to his head.

"Cap'n Jillson's, sah, de cowardly dog! He comed up from behind an' knocked me senseless. Ef he'd a-comed at me liker man, I wouldn't say er word; but now—"

"You want to find him, don't you?"

The negro's eyes gleamed like lightning.

"Never fear, you shall find him. Who winged Wash?"

"Mas'r Hicks."

"Ah! and he don't feel over friendly toward the colonel, I suppose?"

"No, *sah!*"

"All right, we'll have something to eat, and let our horses rest, and then we'll start out on the trail."

CHAPTER XIX.

TONY BRINGS DOWN THE GUERILLA CHIEF.

Breakfast was speedily prepared, the officers ate theirs together, with the troopers in groups at no great distance about them. They would not go to the house on account of the illness of Mrs. Stanwood.

Soon as the meal was finished the bugle sounded and speedily the squadron was mounted.

As Major Peale was about to give the order, Forward! Ellsworth's eyes happened to rest on Tony Tibbits, who was urging his horse ahead at a half trot in order to join his friend Tim Cooney, who was calling for him.

"Wait one moment, Major, if you please," exclaimed the Captain abruptly. "I wish to fulfill a promise I made last night."

"Very well, but don't keep the sqnedron waiting."

"Only a moment, as I said," and riding forward Ellsworth called——

"Tibbits! Tibbits! this way!"

Tony turned, and mechanically his hand went up to his cap.

"That chain and trinket," said the Captain, "have you it about you now?"

"Yes, Captain, I got it from Tim a while ago."

"Very good, ride on to the house and show it to the lady. But mind! if she detains you over two minutes we shall not wait for you. We are going in the direction of the valley. You are not afraid to ride after us alone?"

"No, sir, not at all."

"Very well. But hurry; and if you can rejoin us immediately, I shall be better pleased.

Tony at once dashed off toward the house.

He brought his horse to a stand before a side entrance, and quickly dismounted.

The door stood open, and as he ascended the steps Edna Stanwood appeared in the hallway.

"Ah! its you," she said, hasteoing forward, "come right in, I have been expecting you. But stop a moment where you are, and let me take one good look at you." When taking the boys head between her hands, she gazed down earnestly into his eyes.

Tony looked up into her lovely face wonderingly.

"Yes," murmured the girl at last, "yes, I too can see the look and I no longer marvel at mother's agitation. Did you bring the little keep sake, Anthony?"

"Yes, Miss."

"Let me have it then, and I will see if it is possible for my mother to receive you. She passed a miserable night, and was very poorly a little while ago when I was in her room. Can you wait?"

The captain gave me two minutes, Miss. If I am not back in that time the column will move on, and——"

"I won't keep you a moment. Sit down here in the hallway, where you can hear my voice if I call;" and Edna hastened lightly up the stairs.

She was gone quite two minutes, and descended very slowly, with a thoughtful and almost troubled look upon her brow.

"Tony," she said, seating herself by the side of the boy, and taking his hand in hers, "my poor mother is very weak, and she has just fallen asleep. I dare not wake her. However, let me say, as I entered her room, my cousin, Miss Penrose, caught sight of the chain and trinket which I held in my hand, and instantly recognized it as one she had seen before.

"What she said it is not best that I should repeat to you now; it would take too much time, and I am sure you are anxious to rejoin your comrades who have already passed down the road. But I wish to ask, are you willing to leave this with me for a little while?"

Tony hesitated.

"You need not doubt it will be returned to you; if—"

"Oh, I am sure of that, miss," broke in Tony; "but we may not come back this way, you know."

Edna's face flushed.

"Who told you that?" she asked, hastily. "Did Captain Ellsworth say so?"

"Oh, no, miss; but, you see, we are following up those guerrilla officers—Hicks and Jillson—and we don't know where the chase may lead us."

She thought a moment, and then hastened into a side room, a sort of library.

A minute later she returned, a small, three-cornered note in her hand.

"There," she said, "give that to your captain, and take my word for it, you will come back this way. Now will you leave the chain?"

"Certainly, miss," responded Tony, promptly. "But—but you will take good care of it? You see, it was my poor mother's, and"—with a sob—"it is all I have to remember her by."

"You are quite sure it was your mother's?"

"Oh, yes, miss, I can just remember seeing it about her neck, with that curious thing hanging down. I know, when I lay upon her lap, or in her arms, I used to reach up and play with it, as she bent lovingly over me. I know this," he continued, musingly, "or else—or else, the thing has happened in my dreams. Alas, it is so little I do remember, surely I cannot be mistaken here."

"Go—go, boy, at once!" exclaimed Edna, excitedly; "go, and return as speedily as possible; and rest assured your keepsake shall not get lost."

With a hasty good-morning, Tony ran down the outside steps, and sprang to saddle.

The squadron was already out of sight: but this did not trouble him much, it only caused him a momentary feeling of annoyance. His mind was so much taken up by all Edna had said that he thought of very little else.

Still, he felt the necessity of rejoining his command with as little delay as possible, and so, digging his heels into the horse's flanks—he had no spurs—he put him to the top of his speed.

For some distance his way lay along a level road, with rich open fields on either hand; then came a gradual rise, and when he had reached the top of the hill, he saw that just before him the road took an abrupt bend to the left, and ran through a thick woods.

Now, without in the least being able to account for it, Tony felt a presentiment that danger lurked in that forest, and without slackening the speed of his horse, he unslung the carbine that had been given him, loosened his revolvers, and prepared, as best he could, to meet it.

His horse went down the hill at breakneck speed, and then, suddenly, turned into the wood-bordered road.

Tony was now on the alert; his eyes were searching the underbrush on either side for the slightest indication of a lurking enemy.

All at once he thought he saw a slight movement of a branch of a low bush on the left.

He took another look, and was sure he saw the neck and shoulder of a man, and then the barrel of a short carbine, pointed suggestively in his direction, became apparent to him.

Instantly his own carbine was brought to a "ready."

The skulking enemy evidently saw the movement, and instantly there was a flash, followed by a sharp report, and Tony felt a sensation as though a white-hot iron had been laid across his left temple, and then he felt the warm blood trickling down his cheek.

But this had not for an instant retarded his action, and without checking his horse, he returned the fire, aiming just below where he saw the uncovered neck.

A sharp cry followed the shot, and there was a violent commotion in the underbrush.

Tony brought his horse to a stand, and springing from the saddle, rushed to the cover.

He quickly caught sight of a man in the gray uniform of a rebel officer, trying to crawl away into the bushes.

"Halt!" he cried, sternly, "halt, I say, or I fire! and this time I shall fire to kill."

The officer stopped his onward progress, and turned. Then Tony for the first time caught sight of his face, and, to his utter amazement, recognized Colonel Lester Hicks, the guerrilla chief!

CHAPTER XX.

TONY ACTS THE PART OF FATHER CONFESSOR.

"There's no use wasting any more time on me, boy," said the colonel, gloomily; "you've cooked my goose—I'm done for, sure as preaching." Then, with a gasp, he sank down.

A strange, a solemn feeling took possession of the drummer boy's heart, and slowly making his way to the wounded man, he knelt by his side.

After a moment the colonel endeavored to raise himself.

"Help me," he gasped, "I cannot breathe, I can't—" and again he sank back.

Tony now hardly knew what to do. He was most anxious to hurry on and rejoin his command, and yet he did not like to leave the apparently dying man.

While he was considering what course it was best to adopt the gurrella chief suddenly made another effort to rise.

"A drop of spirits," he gasped.

Now of all things in the world liquor of any kind was just what Tony hadn't got, nor wasn't likely to have. The very smell of the stuff was enough to make him sick, and he invariably kept as far away from it as possible. So he was obliged to say:

"I haven't got any, sir."

"I have," gasped the colonel and indicated his right hand breast pocket.

Tony quickly unbuttoned his coat which had been tightly buttoned across his chest, and felt in the inside pocket.

The first thing his hand encountered was an oblong pocket-book, made of alligator skin. This he drew out and threw upon the ground, and then feeling again, he found the flask of which he was in search.

He took out the cork, and with a grimace of disgust, raised the head of the wounded man, and held the flask to his lips.

The colonel took a long draught, and then, in a stronger voice said:

"Raise me up a little higher, and place my back against that tree."

Tony, with some difficulty, did so.

As he was moving the almost helpless man, his foot came in contact with the side pocket-book and turned it over, causing most of its contents to slip out.

Tony looked round.

A number of letters and a card picture caught his eye.

He hastened to gather them up, when, as he took the picture in his hand, an exclamation of surprise burst from his lips.

"Miss Stanwood!" he murmured, in a lower tone, and gazed long and earnestly at the picture.

Surely it seemed to dawn upon him that the picture was not an exact likeness of the Miss Stanwood from whom he had parted a little while before, there was something more subdued, more gentle, perhaps, revealed in the face before him. It reminded him of something that had struck him in Flora Penrose's quiet features.

Then too the picture was a very old one—ten or fifteen years at least, and yet it represented a woman of between eighteen and twenty years.

He did not know what to make of it until the name written at the bottom caught his eye—

"*Edith* Stanwood," he exclaimed. "It must be her sister," then he began to gather up the letters.

The greater part of these were directed to Lester Hicks, and a little package of half a dozen or more, tied with narrow blue ribbon, had indorsed upon it—"From Edith."

The next one he took up, and which was addressed to Giles Tibbits, was indorsed—"From Silvester Stover, Gettysburg, Penn."

Another exclamation burst from Tony—an exclamation that roused Colonel Hicks from the lethargy into which he had fallen.

"What's that?" he asked, looking up suspiciously.

"Nothing," answered Tony, hastily gathering up the papers, letters and picture, and thrusting them into the pocket-book, which he slipped in his side jacket.

Then once more turning to the wounded man he said:

"Colonel Hicks, you said a little while ago that you had received your death-wound. Do you really think that you are about to die?"

"Think? I know it. See where your cursed shot struck me. I am bleeding to death internally, and can't last much longer."

With that he gave a gasp, and a large quantity of blood flowed from his lips.

"It's an awful thing to die," said the boy, "even if one be fully prepared; how much more terrible, then, if he has not ma e his peace with God. I am but a boy, colonel, but let me say to you, if you have anything on your mind, now—if there is any great wrong you have ever done, it might ease your conscience to confess it; and anything I can do to help you right that wrong, you may rest assured I will do it."

"Why should you suppose I have ever wronged any one?" demanded the colonel, suspiciously.

"There is little time left to enter into explanations," said Tony, firmly. "I do suppose so, though, and I beg, I entreat you, if such really be the case, to do all in your power to make amends."

"What, confess to my murderer? That's a good one! Ha, ha!"

"You forget you first fired at me."

"But I saw you raise your carbine."

"That was merely a precautionary measure."

"Well, well, I understand. And see here, boy, there is an awful load on my mind—murder, double murder, in fact, kidnapping, forgery, and robbery—ay, the worst kind of robbery, robbing the helpless orphan."

"And the burden of all these crimes weighs upon you at this awful moment?"

"Yes."

"Is there nothing you can do to lift it? Can you not make some attonement?"

For a moment the dying man was silent. At length, opening his eyes, the drooping lids of which had hung down heavily, he fixed an earnest gaze upon the brave young lad before him, and said:

"I must be brief; but listen:

"You know the house where, with a number of my men, I was captured last night by Captain Ellsworth and two others, one of whom was yourself? well, that is the residence of one of the oldest and proudest families in the land. The present head of the house is now an old, though vigorous man, who has been the father of several children.

"The oldest child was a daughter; then there were sons and daughters, and at last another girl. That daughter, the latest born, is all of his children that is left alive to-day."

The colonel paused, and he was silent so long, Tony feared he had fainted.

At length he continued:

"But it is of the eldest I have to speak—Edith. She was a grand, stately, yet gentle and confiding woman, and beautiful as a dream. Edna looks very much like her, but—Edna is not Edith."

The colonel's head had fallen forward until his chin rested upon his breast. He seemed to have wholly forgotten Tony's presence, and talked on aloud as though thinking to himself.

CHAPTER XXI.

HICK'S CONFESSION AND DEATH.

"Yes, Edith was as beautiful as a dream," murmured the dying man, "and—I loved her—ay, loved her as woman never was loved before, and she, I believe, loved me."

"But her father, her mother, her other relatives—none of them liked me, and perhaps, they had just cause for their dislike. I was wild—desperately wild, and dissipated a large fortune before I was twenty-five.

"Well, then came my accomplished cousin—Antoine Warsden, the only son and heir of Govenor Warsden, the wealthiest man in all this southern country, and saw my Edith, and there was no more chance for me.

"Father, mother, the girl herself, all received him with open arms, and before I hardly had time to catch my breath, they were married, and my happiness and prospects were blighted for ever.

"I saw my prospects were blighted, for more than mere love was concerned in all this, I had hoped to keep Antoine single, in case of his death I became sole heir to the Marsden estates, and now my affairs were in such a condition that the possession of my cousin's fortune had become, I believed, absolutely necessary to me.

"I was still brooding over my fancied wrongs when the news reached me that Govenor Marsden was dead—his wife had died a year or more before—and thus my cousin and successful rival was in full possession of his colossal fortune.

"I gnashed my teeth in rage. She whom I had loved, and who had scorned me, was now placed on the very pinnacle of wealth and power, and could afford to look down upon me with cold disdain.

"Should I submit? Should I quietly permit her to enjoy t all, while I was poor and miserable?

"By the Eternal! No!

"I swore to ruin the false couple, I swore to possess myself of all that was theirs, and deliberately I went to work to accomplish my purpose.

"Months rolled by. I saw that I had a hard task yet before me; but just as I was beginning to think I could see daylight. I had another setback, word came that a son and heir had been born to them.

"I swore to delay no longer in my revenge, which I promised myself should be so full and complete as to include them all in one general ruin.

"I had many specimens of my cousin's hand-writing, and I was what is called handy with the pen; so it did not take me long to draw up a will to suit myself.

"At this time Antoine was in Washington, on public business, I went there too.

"I personated him, and so the requisite number of persons witnessed the forged will, firmly believing that it was the real Antoine Marsen who made it.

"Shortly after this—not wishing to run too much risk myself, I got up a quarrel between my cousin and Abner Jillson, who at that time was a very young and hot headed fellow.

"He called Marsden out and killed him, unfairly it was said, and for many reasons the matter was hushed up. I doubt if even General Stanwood himself knows the real facts to this day.

"My own course was now plain before me. Edith had determined to return to her father's house with her child. I resolved to take that child from her.

"I secured the services of a trusty man, and waylaid her on the road.

"She became unconscious from fright. When she came to herself, a dead child, whose face was horribly disfigured, and who was dressed in her own child's clothes, lay by her side.

"She was told that it had been killed by a kick from one of the horses.

"She refused to believe the story. She emphatically declared that the child was not hers, and loudly called for her own darling boy. And this cry she kept up all that night and until the evening of the next day, when her father arrived at the house where she had been conveyed, in order to take her home.

"Once in her childhood's home, she became more quiet. She still insisted, however, that the dead boy was a stranger. But her friends thought this only the ravings of an unsound mind, and so the little one was buried, and no search was made for the living child.

"That child was in my possession.

"At first it was my attention to kill it; but somehow I could not bring myself to do that Then I thought of a sweeter vengeance.

"The man who had helped me in the plot thus far was one Tibbits, a queer sort of a fellow, with very little conscience. He had a wife living in Knoxville.

"He could be hired to go anywhere—do anything, and I had always found him reliable. There is such a thing as honor among thieves.

"Well, I gave him the child and told him to take it North somewhere, gain a residence, seem to be desperately poor, and at last see that the brat fetched up in the almshouse.

"He sought out his wife, gave the child into her care, and followed out my instructions to the letter.

"They settled in, or near, Gettysburg, and he managed to get in with Silvester Stover, the guardian of the town poor. A satisfactory arrangement was made with him, after due time, to put the boy on the town farm, and when it was done, Tibbits and his wife disappeared.

"After a while, when the boy had become quite a lad, it was arranged that he should be bound out to one Gripper, a hard-fisted farmer, who was privately well paid to keep a jealous eye on him, and there, I suppose, he is to this day."

"And his poor mother?" faltered Tony, "his poor mother, did she die of a broken heart?"

Lester Hicks looked up with a start. He seemed to awake as from a dream.

"His mother, his mother," he said, "whose mother?"

"Tony's—the boy you stole away."

"Ah, Tony! that's what they called him, to be sure. He was named Antoine, after his father, or Anthony, as it is in English; but he was called Tony by Tibbits, and took that worthy's last name. Yes, yes, Tony Tibbits, that's the boy. And—ha! ha!—he's my cousin and heir."

"But his mother—is she dead?" urged Tony.

"Dead? of course she is—died within a month after her child was stolen away, believing, too, in its existence, to the moment of her death. And what's more, at the last, I believe, she made a convert of her mother. Edna was too young to think much about the matter in those days; for that—let—me—see, must have been quite twelve or thirteen years ago.

"Edna!" he continued, after a moment's silence; "ah, yes, and since then I have been a suitor for her hand—a suitor, and rejected. But—ha! ha! not with the scorn she lavished on Jillson, the slayer of her brother-in-law. I wonder how much she knows, or suspects, of that affair. I wonder if her father let her into the secret of those papers, which he intrusted to her care, and which, if we could have got hold of them would have insured to me another fortune."

Again the wounded man became silent, and Tony continued thoughtfully kneeling by his side.

Suddenly the dying sinner gasped for breath, and pointing to the half-empty flask on the ground, managed to utter the word—

"Quick!"

Tony picked up the flask and held it to his lips.

He drank eagerly, and when at length the boy took it away, murmured feebly:

"Tony Tibbits! Yes, that is what they called him. I wish—I wish—word could be got to him. I wish I could right that poor child's wrongs, at least. But this war—no friends—dying like a dog in these woods—"

"You would really like to see that boy?" broke in Tony, "to tell him you have wronged him, and to do all that lies in your power to give him a name and station in life?"

"Yes, yes, I would," was the eager answer.

"Behold, then, he is before you!" said Tony solemnly.

"What! you! you, Edith Stanwood's child?"

"I am he who has been known as Tony Tibbits," was the quiet reply.

"And I die by your hand! Ah, boy, you have fearfully avenged your parents' wrongs." And with a gasp he fell forward, a stream of blood issuing from his mouth.

Tony caught him before his face touched the earth, and endeavored to raise him up.

It was useless. He was already dead. And so the lone boy laid him on his back, and slowly made his way to the road, where his well-trained horse was standing.

For a moment he stood irresolute, and then, as he was about to spring to saddle, the distant sound of hoofstrokes fell on his ear.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SEVERED ARM.

Tony turned quickly in the direction of the sound, and a moment later caught sight of half-a-dozen mounted men just coming into view.

Were they friends or enemies?

At that distance he could not tell.

Taking his horse by the bridle he led him a short distance into the underbrush, and then returned to his post of observation.

Blue coats! he was sure of it, and in another moment he was quite as sure that they were members of his own company

He rushed out into the middle of the road, and when the advancing squad caught sight of him, they sent up a loud cheer of joy and relief, and put their horses to a gallop:

Tony now saw that his old friend Coropal Snowden headed the squad, and that the indefatigable Tim rode close behind.

"I'm very glad to find you safe and sound, my boy," said Coropal Snowden, with a great deal of feeling.

"Be ther powers!" exclaimed Tim, "I was mightly onaisy on your account, Tony. But, sure, of anything had happened to you, I'd have murthered every ribel in their confederacy, so I would."

"Do you want to know an easy way for doing that, Tim?" asked Ed. Lillie slyly.

"Shure, thin, I do."

"Just talk French to them," said Ed, amid a shout of laughter.

"Oh, go 'long wid yer," cried the disgusted Tim.

"Where's your horse, Tony?" asked Pender at this moment.

"Right here, close at hand," was the reply.

"Well, come then, my boy, mount," exclaimed Corporal Snowden, somewhat impatiently, we must rejoin the squadron without delay.

"What, did you come out on purpose to find me?" asked the boy.

"Certainly, the captain got very uneasy on your account, and so sent us."

"Shure, thin, don't I bea tillin yer that it was *me self* that got onaisy" exclaimed Tim, "and I wouldn't give ther captain any pace till he sent us."

"Have you found either of the escaped prisoners?" asked Tony, without making any movement toward his horse.

"No; but what did you stop here for?" asked the corporal.

"Dismount, all of you, and I will show you."

Wonderingly, they dismounted, and Tony led the way to the spot where the dead guerilla chief was lying.

An exclamation of astonishment burst from their lips as they caught sight of the dead body, and then turning to Tony, Corporal Snowden asked:

"Is this your work, boy?"

Tony gave an affirmative nod.

"Well, we must hurry back now," said Snowden, "and the question is, what shall we do with the body?"

"I should say, leave it right where it is until we return," said Lillie.

"Ah, but are we sure to come back this way?" asked the corporal.

"I should say yes."

"Then we'll leave it."

"One moment," said Pender. "He was the leader of all the guerillas in these parts; he may have had important papers about him."

"Right, my boy; I never thought of that; we'll search the body," and immediately they did so.

They were richly rewarded for their pains, for, as Ellsworth had neglected to do more than disarm his prisoners the night before, they now found in a secret pocket on the inside of his undershirt, important papers from the rebel commanding general, and also certain memoranda, showing where the guerillas had buried the greater part of their plunder, together with important papers and documents of a private nature.

"This has been a lucky day for you, Tony Tibbits," said Corporal Snowden, exultingly. "Your share of the booty will be pretty large, I can tell you."

"I don't want a cent's worth of it," cried Tony, earnestly. "Let my share be divided among my brave comrades. If they see fit to promote me, I shall be glad—because," he added, promptly, "I ought to be something more than a mere drummer boy; but I ask, and will have no other reward."

"That's strange," murmured Snowden.

"Be dad, ther by's proud—jist loike meself," exclaimed Tim. "He's got good blood in his veins."

"And have you, Tim?" asked Lillie.

"Have I! Shure, thin, an' didn't yer know I was ther direct descendant av wan av ther greatest av all ther kings av owld Oireland?"

"Never heard of it"

"It's thrue for yer."

The boys sent up a shout of laughter, amid which the order to mount was heard.

They were quickly in the saddle, and, at a lively trot, rode once more in the direction of the valley.

As they entered it, they saw the whole column advancing toward them.

"Wait one moment," called out Corporal Snowden, "I have something of the utmost importance to report."

The column was brought to a halt, and wonderingly, Major Peale and Captain Ellsworth rode toward the little squad.

"What is it?" asked the former.

"In the first place," answered Snowden, "Colonel Hicks is dead!"

"Dead! Who killed him, and where?"

"Tony Tibbits shot him," was the answer, "and he lies in the woods to the east of the road, about a mile from this."

"Did you find any papers on the body?" asked Peale, eagerly.

"The most important, major."

"Where are they?"

Snowden handed him all the papers.

"Captain, we must examine these at once," said Peale.

They did so, and after deciding that most of them must be sent to the commanding general without delay, considered the memoranda relating to the buried plunder.

"Why," exclaimed Peale, suddenly, "the spot he describes is close by; I can find it with very little trouble. Come!"

"We shall want help?"

"Yes, let those fellows of youre accompany us."

Ellsworth gave the necessary command. Peale left the column in charge of one of his officers, and accompanied by Ellsworth and the party that had found Tony, proceeded to hunt for the spot where the guerrillas' booty was burried.

After a quarter of an hour's search they found it, and Peale at once exclaimed:

"Somebody has disturbed the earth here within half an hour!"

"Within five minutes, I say," amended Lillie.

"Yes, by Jove, and here's a spade hidden under these bushes," said Pender, drawing forth the useful article.

"Where's those two niggers?" asked Peale.

"Out yonder," answered someone.

"Call them."

Ellick and Wash were called, and were soon throwing out dirt at a lively rate, the former with the spade, the latter with a piece of board he had picked up.

Ellsworth's extreme impstience would not permit him to be an idle spectator, and so unbuckling his sword and throwing it down, he too [illegible] a piece of board, which at some time had formed th[illegible] side of a box, or something of the kind, and went [illegible] digging.

Tony mecanically picked up the captain's sword, and as mechanically drew it from the scabbard and examined the blade.

A slight—a very slight rustling in the bushes to his left, and just back of the party digging, attracted his attention.

He gazed earnestly in that direction for an instant, then the scabbard fell to the ground, the sword was upraised, and with one bound he was in the bushes.

The sword descended.

Crack!

But at the instant the finger pulled the trigger, the arm itself was severed from the body at the shoulder, and the shot struck the ground near the pit, doing not the slightest harm.

"There," cried Tony sternly, pointing to the severed member, "there lies the hand and arm that was upraised to take my father's life.—Villain! Scoundrel! Murderer of an innocent man! know that your just punishment has been inflicted by the son of Antoine Marsden!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONCLUSION.

Captain Abner Jillson, who it was that lay bleeding on the ground, on hearing Tony's declaration, looked up into the boys face, with an expression of the utmost horror.

"You—you—Antoine Marsden's son?" he gasped.

"My God! this is indeed retribution."

By this time the whole party had gathered round, and were looking from Tony to his victim, in astonishment.

At length Peale took Tony one side.

"Who are you anyway?" he asked impulsively.

"My right name is Antoine Marsden," answered the boy, "and I am the son of that Antoine Marsden, whom this man killed so trecherously in a so-called duel."

Major Peale now regarded the drummer boy with profound respect.

"You are Governor Marsden's grandson then?" he said.

"Yes."

"Of course, then, you must also be a grandson of General Stanwood?"

"Yes, sir."

"What! are you Edna's nephew?" exclaimed Ellsworth, now coming up.

"It seems so."

"I always thought you were something more than appeared, and I now understand the interest Mrs. Stanwood takes in you. But this villain, can we do anything for him?"

They turned toward the mutilated guerilla. He had managed to pick up his detached arm with his left hand and was regarding it attentively.

With a sigh he dropped it, and with a more profound sigh, fell back upon the ground.

"Can we do anything for you, captain?" asked Ellsworth, in a compassionate tone.

"Yes—if you will."

"What is it?"

"Let me die in peace."

"But must you die?"

"Of course. I am bleeding to death, and all the surgeons in your army couldn't save me."

"Very well, you shall have your wish."

"One thing more."

"Well?"

"After you've got that hole dug out, pitch me into it and bury me. You'll find much that belongs to that boy there, as well as property of the Stanwoods."

"You shall be buried as you desire."

"Now leave me."

They turned away.

The digging proceeded, and treasure to a large amount was brought to light, together with title-deeds and the valid will of Tony's father.

After all had been unearthed, they returned to look at Jillson.

He was dead, and from the expression on his face, it was evident he had died in mortal agony.

He was hastily buried, and then, having made provision for the transportation of the treasure, Major Peale ordered the squadron to start on its return march.

"Forward!" was now the order, and in less than ten minutes they were at the Stanwood mansion.

Edna and Flora met Peale, Ellsworth and Tony at the door, and requested them to ascend to Mrs. Stanwood's room.

As they entered they noticed that the invalid lady ha[illegible] a gold chain, with a curious trinket attached.

"Step this way," she said.

They did so.

She held out the trinket, at the same time touchi[illegible] concealed spring.

It flew open, and revealed on either side a pictu[illegible] one of a noble-looking man, the other a beautiful lady. Each of these pictures she turned aside, and behind one were three little locks of hair, behind the other was the picture of a bright-eyed, laughing boy.

"Now," asked Mrs. Stanwood solemnly, at the same time pointing to Tony, "whose son is he?"

"Antoine Marsdens," answered the major promptly.

"Cousin Edith's," said Flora.

"He is your grandson, dear mother," exclaimed Edna, throwing her arms about her mother's neck.

"There could be no possible doubt with what you now show us," said Ellsworth earnestly, "but without the help of that locket, the boy himself has already established his identity to-day and more, has avenged his father's death."

"How is that?" exclaimed the lady, eargerly.

And then the story of Tony's adventures was told.

"And so Lester Hicks and Abner Jillson are dead—died by the hand of Edith's son. Yes, God's judgments are sure," she said. "Truly He never slumbers nor sleeps!"

As Ellsworth began Tony's story, a noble-looking, gray-haired man, wearing the uniform of a general officer in the Union army, quietly entered the room and stood unnoticed just within the doorway, his eyes intently fixed on the boy, while he drank in the captain's words.

Now he s[illegible]ng forward, and folding Tony in his arms, exclaimed.

"My boy—my dear—dear boy, thank God I have found you at last,—Edna, you are quite sure all those papers are safe?"

Yes, father. Ellick and Wash took care of that."

"Then Tony's fortune will be as great as ever was the governor's—his grandfather, and those two faithful fellows are no longer servants but friends. Now let us all have a little family talk together, and plan for the future until dinner-time. Don't go, major, I know the state of your own and Flora's heart, and captain, I must ever consider you as one of us, you have been such a faithful guardian to this boy."

"I should certainly like to be one of you in fact, and if"—turning to Edna and holding out his hand—"I have read your heart aright——"

"Oho! that's the way the matter stands, is it? You shall have my consent, if you can get hers?"

Edna's hand fell willingly into the captain's.

"Well, that's settled," exclaimed the general, "and now we're a family party indeed."

* * *

The next day Peale and Ellsworth, with their troops, joined the Twentieth regiment and reported to its commander.

"And so you have really broke up that band of guerrillas?" cried the lieutenant-colonel excitedly. "But where are your prisoners? you ought to have a hundred at least."

"*We lost them,*" replied the major gravely.

"Yes," added Ellsworth, "and I very much fear, they'll never be found in this world again."

Ellsworth was now advanced to the rank of major, Small became second lieutenant, Snowden was made a sergeant, and Duffy and Tony became corporals.

A little later the Twentieth was ordered to join Sherman on his advance on Atlanta.

They saw some terrible fighting, and their numbers were frightfully thinned out.

Atlanta fell, and then the grand march to the sea began.

Tony was made a sergeant on the field before Atlanta, for gallant conduct under fire. And now, to his great joy, he found himself a commissioned officer, with an appointment on his grandfathers staff.

* * *

The war is over, the army disbanded. Major—now Colonel Peale and Flora Penrose are married and live on the Peale plantation, but a short distance from her aunts.

Lieutenant-Colonel Ellsworth and Edna are also man and wife, and reside at the Stanwood mansion.

Tony, after graduating at Yale, and marrying a pretty Yankee girl, has settled down on the old Marsden estate, where he lives to this day, surrounded by a large family of children.

Peter Small left the army a captain; Snowden changed into another regiment, and became a major. Tim Cooney stuck to Tony, and is now his overseer. The other boys all turned out well, and thank God, are all alive to-day, to read this story of their trials and adventures while fighting the battles of the Union.

[THE END.]

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